Vol 7 **The War Illustrated** N° 163

Edited by Sir John Hammerton

SIXPENCE SEPTEMBER 17, 1943.

HE KNOCKED OUT THE LUFTWAFFE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN—Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham, commander of the North-West African Tactical Air Force, here indicating targets on a map during a Press conference in Sicily. Main contribution of his men to our triumph there was the pounding of the island's airfields in June and early July and methodical destruction of the Axis air fleet. Up to August 12 a total of 1,691 enemy aircraft had been shot down or captured on the ground in Sicily. *Photo, British Official*

Into War's Background With Our Roving Camera

Capt. **MARION ROSS**, of Toronto, first woman to be commissioned in the Canadian Army as a Medical Officer. With a contingent of Sister Nurses attached to the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps she accompanied the Dominion's Sicily-bound troops to the Middle East. A bacteriologist, she joined the R.C.A.M.C. in November 1942.

ROYAL MARINE BERET, replacing the field service cap for all ranks except certain specialists, is of navy blue with a scarlet patch behind the regiment's famous Globe and Laurel badge. The beret will not displace the blue peaked cap with scarlet band worn with the blue service dress—the traditional Marine uniform. (See also article in p. 174.)

ONE OF 800 VOLUNTEERS who work for 10 hours on a Sunday in 38 L.M.S. Railway depots cleaning engines, polishing wheels, oiling, and doing other maintenance jobs for which man-power is in short supply, Mrs. Williamson needs no assurance from anyone of the importance of her part time war work.

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Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Canadian Official, Daily Mirror, Topical Press.

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BASKETS FOR PIGEONS (left) is the war effort of 80-year-old Harry Dallaway, of Herne Bay, Kent, who has followed the craft of basket-making for 60 years. Carrier pigeons taken on bombing raids are confined in baskets such as these until released for emergency message-carrying to the base. (See also pp. 122 and 686, Vol. 6.)

BEATING RETREAT in Hyde Park—a thrilling spectacle provided for home-holidaying Londoners on August 24, 1943, by massed drums and fifes of the Grenadier, Coldstream, Irish and Welsh Guards, together with pipers of the Irish Guards. This ancient ceremony, normally performed at sundown, has nothing to do with retirement from battle. It indicates, for the troops whose band is playing, that general activities are over for the day, and in peacetime it is part of the ordinary routine.

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

ALTHOUGH it is now generally understood why the Germans were able to carry out the Messina evacuation with a considerable measure of success, there is still some feeling of disappointment that the bag was not complete. That, I think, is because many people expected that our greatly superior air power would be able to make evacuation of any considerable force, and heavy equipment in particular, impracticable.

Previous experience did not, in fact, warrant that expectation, and it may therefore be of interest to analyze the conditions which make for successful evacuations or which, conversely, render them impracticable, and to recall the strikingly numerous precedents which may be studied.

The primary essential for successful evacuation is, of course, that the sea passage can be made in reasonable safety. That postulates, in the case of passages too long to be made under cover of darkness, control of sea communications in the vital area. Where passages are short, control may, however, be effected by air cover or, as at Messina, by coastal batteries keeping the enemy's surface warships at a distance. At the worst, fast craft may be able to evade the enemy and escape by night.

Time and opportunities to assemble the necessary sea transport are important factors affecting the sea passage, and where it is over long distances, necessitating the use of comparatively large vessels, the difficulties in this respect are greatly increased. Moreover, large vessels afford good targets to the enemy aircraft. The shortness of the passage is on all counts, therefore, obviously of vital importance where control of sea communications is not assured by naval and air strength.

RUSSIAN FRONT, August 27, 1943. Kharkov fallen, the Russians thrust towards Kiev and Poltava, with no hint of a threat to Taganrog, which fell three days later.
By courtesy of The Daily Telegraph

Air protection of points of embarkation and disembarkation and during passage presents special difficulties. The force embarking can never have air bases within its final bridgehead, and to maintain an adequate flak cover entails almost certainly the abandonment of a large amount of heavy equipment. The situation is, of course, immensely eased when the sea passage is so short that fighter aircraft can operate from the disembarkation side, and more so where, as at Messina, flak cover can be provided from both sides.

YET even when such protection was not available air power in great superiority has proved incapable of preventing evacuation, though it has caused very heavy losses. This is probably due to the fact that air attack is bound to a great extent to be intermittent and that at night it lacks precision. Actually, when naval conditions render evacuation at all practicable, the only decisive way of preventing it being carried through is by land attack.

Wherever rearguards have held out, evacuation has been carried through with a considerable measure of success, in spite of air attacks. Where land protection fails the result is decisive, especially if armour effects a rapid break-through. When it is possible to maintain secrecy evacuation may be, as at Gallipoli, completely successful. Even if the intention to evacuate can for a time be concealed much may be saved.

Secrecy at Gallipoli was surprisingly maintained, in spite of the close observation the enemy had over embarkation beaches; and Kiska has now proved that secrecy, in spite of air reconnaissance, may under certain circumstances still be achieved. Even at Messina there is little doubt that the enemy had withdrawn a large part of his equipment and part of his personnel before his intention to evacuate was fully revealed. Secrecy in the critical final disengagement of rearguards is quite possible to attain unless the enemy is prepared and able to break down all rearguard resistance with a violent attack.

TO get the Messina evacuation in its correct perspective the evacuations which have been carried out in this war may be recalled. Their number is surprising, and all have been amazingly successful, in spite of the fact that the evacuating force was in practically every case in a position of marked air inferiority. In Norway, at Namsos and Aandalsnes, conditions were particularly unfavourable. The sea passage necessitated the use of vessels of considerable tonnage which took time to load and presented good targets to an air force enjoying complete superiority.

Anti-aircraft defence was mainly what could be provided by warships, themselves targets for attack. Yet the enemy's air efforts, though very damaging, were indecisive. Fortunately, the Germans had not sufficient strength on land to break through our ill-equipped and exhausted rearguards. For that, no doubt, we owe a debt to Norwegian troops, who helped keep the enemy at bay.

NEW BRITISH 4·2-in. MORTAR in action near Adrano, Sicily, where it proved as useful as in Tunisia. The 4·2-in. throws a 2-lb. bomb 400 yards, reaching a height of 4,000 ft. at the peak of its trajectory. *Photo, British Official*

GENERAL KONIEV, one of the victorious Soviet triumvirate of generals who recaptured Kharkov on August 23, 1943, reading of the progress of the campaign from a tape-machine at his H.Q. *Photo, Pictorial Press*

Then came Dunkirk, a miracle of naval improvisation. Fortunately, distances allowed all sorts of craft to be employed on the sea passage and aircraft based on England to afford a degree of cover. Essentially, however, it was a race against the time our extensive and weak bridgehead position could hold back the German Army. Somaliland was another case in which everything depended on rearguards, and the air factor was of little importance. Greece and Crete, again, found the enemy with absolute air supremacy; yet the Navy, accepting immense risks and suffering heavy losses, got the Army away. It was a desperate race against time, won before the enemy's army could deliver a decisive blow.

IT should be remembered too, that in Russia the garrisons of Odessa, Sebastopol and Kerch were successfully evacuated by the combined action of Russian rearguards and naval forces, in spite of the enemy's great air superiority. During the siege of Tobruk, although the port was subjected to constant air attack, the relief of a division was successfully accomplished. In all these cases it should be noted that success depended on control of sea communications and the protection afforded by rearguards, and that the enemy's air supremacy failed to give decisive results.

At Hong Kong, Singapore, on the second occasion at Tobruk, in Tunisia, at Pantelleria and in the Pacific islands, no attempt at evacuation was made.

Now to compare the situation at Messina with these previous experiences. The shortness of the distance across the Straits enabled the passage to be covered by coastal batteries assisted by an admittedly inferior air force. That practically eliminated the possibility of decisive naval interference such as the naval blockade of Tunisia established.

The terrain presented the enemy with special opportunities of holding up the attacking army with mines and demolition. A rapid and decisive break-through by armour such as sealed the fate of the German Army in Tunisia, therefore, was impracticable.

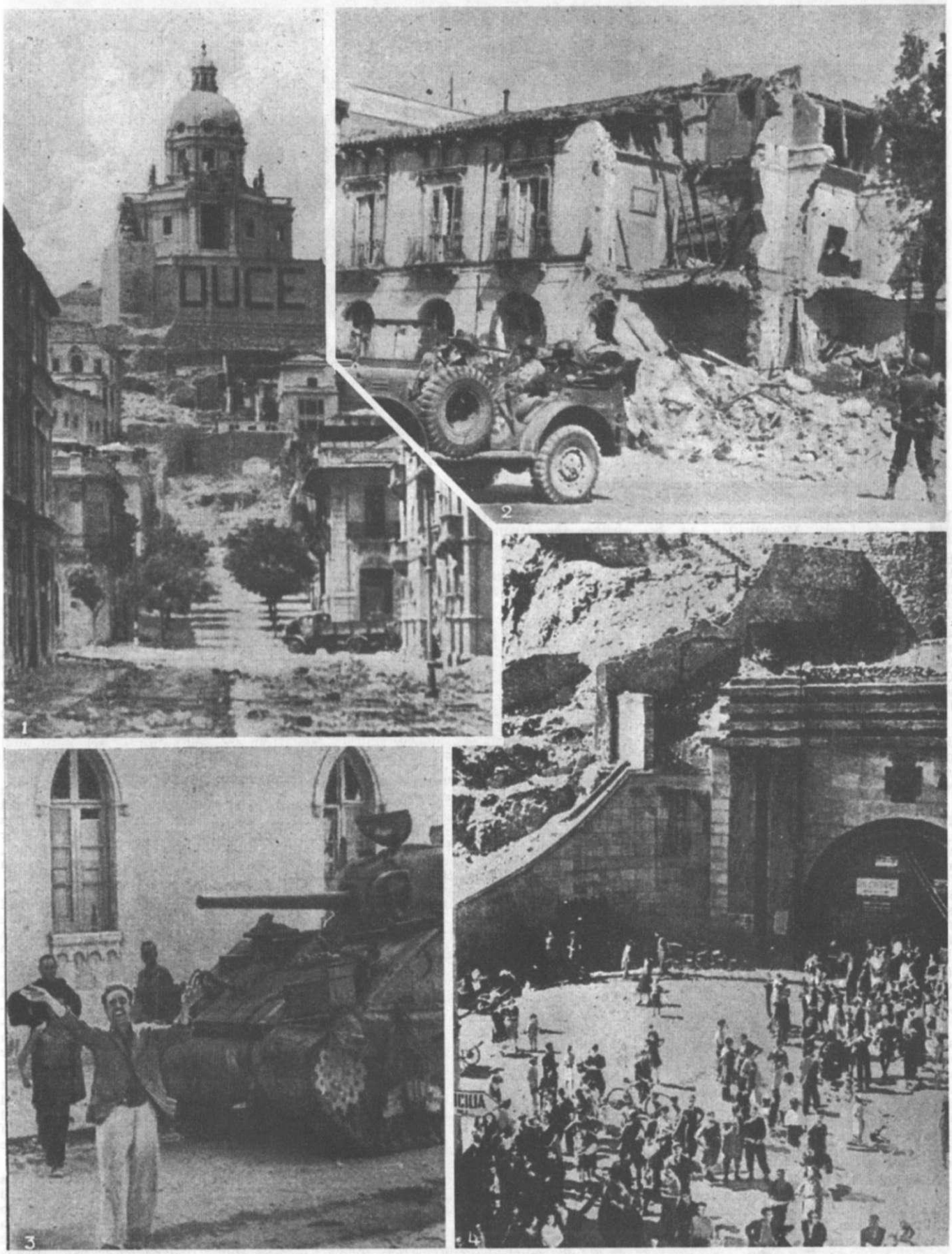
Under these circumstances practically the whole responsibility for preventing the evacuation was thrown on the Allied air forces, and the conditions were exceptionally unfavourable. The enemy, owing to the shortness of the crossing, could make the fullest use of the cover of darkness, could use craft which took a minimum time to load and discharge, and which presented tiny targets.

When the Axis in Sicily Was Nearing Its End

ON THE LAST LAP of the 39 days' campaign which freed Sicily, Pte. Stanley Davies, of Bramley, Leeds (1), is seen with one of many useful pack-mules captured from the enemy by the 51st (Highland) Division in the 8th Army's advance on Biancavilla ; note the swastika branded on the mule's neck. Under the walls of the Cathedral at Randazzo lies the wreckage of enemy transport (2) which fell victim to our accurate road-strafing. British 25-pounders in action (3) near Zafferana.

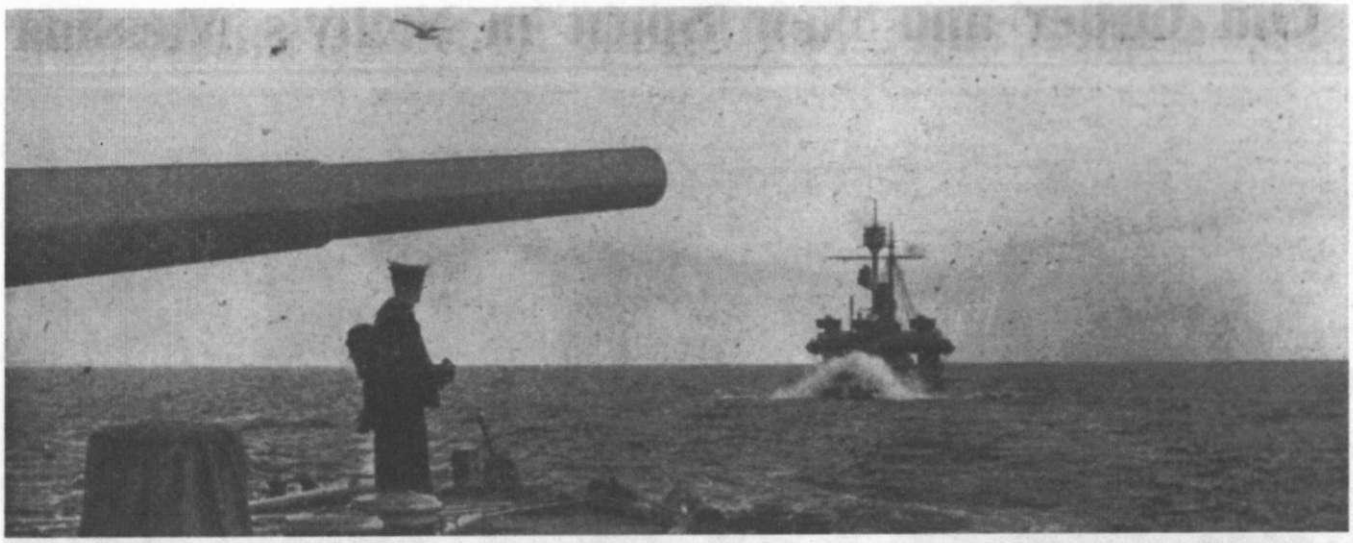
Photos, British Official ; Crown Copyright

Old Order and New Spirit in Sicily's Messina



THE MAN RESPONSIBLE for the horror which overtook Messina was lauded in slogans such as this one overlooking the battle-scarred streets (1), but a citizen's open-armed welcome of the Allied liberators (3) expressed the change of heart of the many, some of whom emerge with tremendous relief from their tunnel-shelter (4) knowing their long nightmare to be ended. Lieut.-Gen. Patton, commander of the American 7th Army, rode into the captured town on August 17, 1943 (2).

Photos, British Official; U.S. Official



FLAGSHIP OF THE DANISH NAVY, the 3,800-ton Niels Iuel, followed by her sister vessel, the 3,500-ton coastal defence ship Peder Skram. While trying to escape to Sweden on August 29, 1943, after the Germans had taken over the government of Denmark, the flagship, which mounted 36 guns and two torpedo tubes, was scuttled by her captain, Carl Westermann, in Helsingoer (Elsinore) harbour. The Peder Skram was one of 20 Danish war vessels which were also scuttled in Copenhagen harbour before the Nazis could seize them—two new destroyers, four torpedo boats, nine submarines, and minesweepers and smaller craft. *Photo, Pictorial Press—Exclusive to* THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

THE WAR AT SEA

by Francis E. McMurtrie

FROM the appointment of Vice-Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten to be Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, for charge of operations based on India and Ceylon against Japan, it is evident that greater activity in that quarter may be looked for within the next few months. It is not generally realized that Lord Louis, in addition to being a fine leader, is also an extremely astute planner, who leaves nothing to chance if it can be avoided. As Chief of Combined Operations, he has proved his worth ; and the new appointment should give further scope for his abilities.

Up to now the only operations against the Japanese in this area have been purely local ones, designed to drive the enemy out of Akyab. Their failure should have taught some valuable lessons for the future campaign.

One of the handicaps from which our Eastern Fleet is undoubtedly suffering is lack of good bases within reach of enemy-occupied territories. Colombo has no dock able to take anything bigger than a cruiser, while Trincomalee possesses few resources beyond its excellent natural harbour. The Japanese seizure of Singapore deprived us of our finest base in the East. Moreover, the enemy has taken care to occupy the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, in the Bay of Bengal, which possess more than one good harbour capable of being converted into a naval base.

To drive the Japanese out of Burma, Siam, Malaya, and the Dutch Indies is going to be a long and arduous task, which will need careful planning. Before an effective blow can be struck, the enemy defences must be studied and possible weak spots investigated. Every available item of information concerning climate, natural resources, and transport facilities has to be accumulated and subjected to careful examination before any decision is reached on the plan of campaign. As the approach has to be made by sea, the problem in the first instance is a naval one, involving the passage of the attacking armies to the most suitable landing place.

Our Eastern Fleet under the command of Admiral Sir James Somerville is believed to have been reinforced of late. Its strength must depend upon that of the forces which it may be expected to meet. Here there is scope for speculation, since it is uncertain whether the Japanese will be willing to gamble any considerable proportion of their naval force on the defence of outlying conquests. Most probably they will endeavour to keep their main fleet intact, unless and until Japan proper is threatened by the gathering strength of the Allied attack.

After allowing for losses, Japan has probably still at her disposal ten or twelve battleships, at least two of which are large new units of over 40,000 tons. In aircraft carriers, strength has been seriously affected by the losses at Midway Island ; but there may be as many as four fleet carriers available if the work of replacing sunken ships has gone ahead as rapidly as might be expected.

JAPANESE Cruiser and Destroyer Losses Assessed

Cruiser strength is in dispute, for though U.S. Navy and Army claims at their maximum would account for almost every Japanese ship in this category, it has been suggested by American writers that there has been too much optimism about these claims. One correspondent has assessed Japanese cruiser losses at anything from 15 to 25 ships, the lower figure being the more likely. It would therefore seem reasonable to assume that Japan can still dispose of between 20 and 30 cruisers.

In destroyers the position is somewhat similar, but after allowing for a reasonable proportion of the losses claimed and adding something for new construction, it is probable that Japan can muster fully 80 or 90 destroyers. In submarines her losses are not believed to be heavy, and have probably been replaced in full ; a total of 70 or more seems a reasonable estimate, midget submarines being excluded.

From these forces the Japanese might allot a squadron comprising say four battleships, two aircraft carriers, a dozen cruisers, and appropriate numbers of destroyers and submarines to oppose any Allied assault from the Indian Ocean. Seaplane carriers may also be employed to economize in the use of fully-equipped aircraft carriers, following the practice adopted in the past.

This would still leave the enemy with quite a formidable fleet for defence in the Pacific, while the mobility of modern warships would always enable the Indian Ocean contingent to be withdrawn to reinforce it if required, provided action on terms likely to endanger its survival were avoided. It may be argued that such cautious strategy scarcely accords with Japanese methods in 1941-42 ; but it has to be remembered that today our Eastern opponents are no longer in a position to launch a big offensive, and must content themselves with trying to hold what they have already taken.

Undoubtedly the possession of Singapore confers considerable advantage on its holders. From this point it is possible to strike at Allied sea forces either through the Straits of Malacca or the Strait of Sunda, while any approach it may be sought to make to Singapore by sea is likely to be detected long before it gets near. Indeed, it is questionable if it will be possible to attack Singapore at all from the southward or westward until the islands of Java and Sumatra have been reconquered.

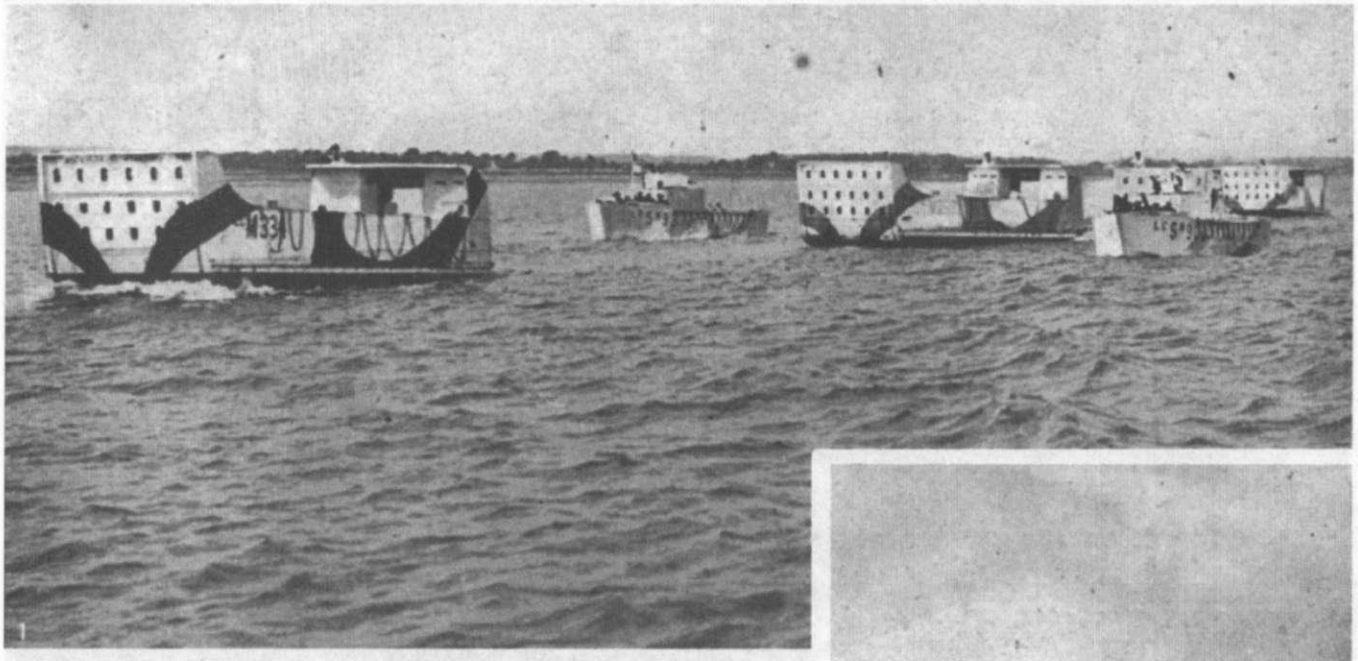
It would seem preferable to follow the same course as the Japanese did in 1941, and retake Malaya first. Singapore would then be open to attack from the north, across the Johore Strait, and, failing superiority at sea, it is difficult to see how Japan could retain the base for any length of time.

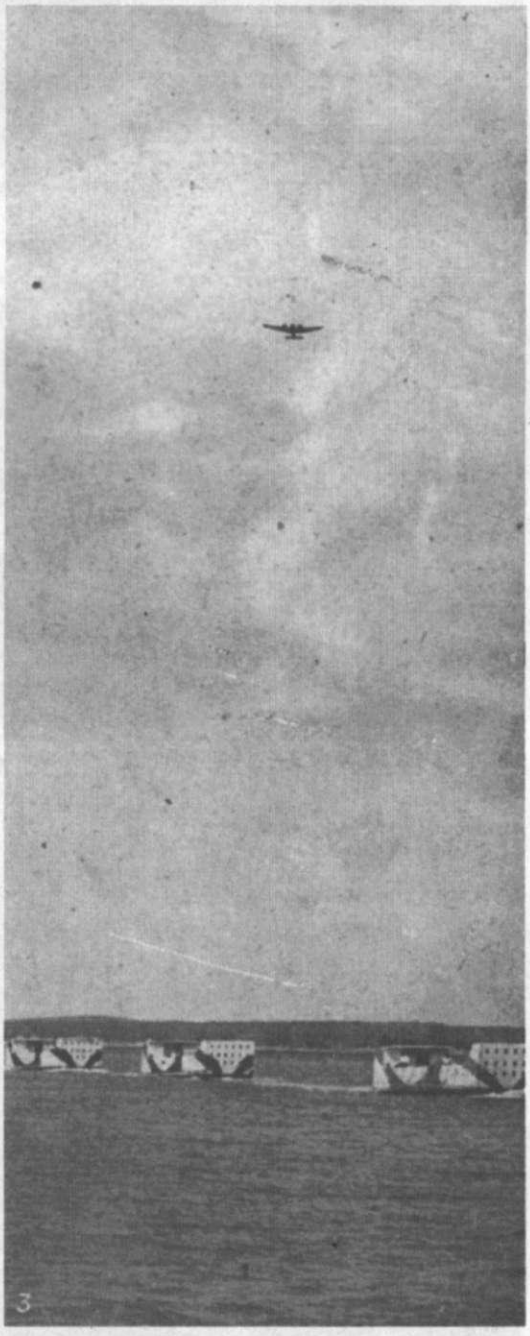
IT may be assumed that any attack launched from India and Ceylon would synchronize with other Allied attacks from the direction of Australia on the Dutch Indies, and from the Solomons on Japanese positions in the Caroline and Mariana Islands. With the enormous growth of the British and United States Navies during recent months, sufficient cover should be available for expeditions against outlying islands, enabling a gradual but methodical approach to be made to the seas surrounding Japan itself.

Then, and only then, is it likely that Japanese naval strength will be concentrated in a supreme effort to win a sea victory and so save the situation. Though the issue of such a conflict can scarcely be in doubt, the enemy may be relied on to fight hard.

Such immense distances separate the various islands which are in Japanese hands that all this will inevitably be a lengthy process. To seek to hasten it unduly would be to risk a set-back which might prolong the struggle unnecessarily. Experience has already demonstrated, in the Solomons more particularly, the best method of dealing with Japanese armed forces.

Floating 'Pillboxes' Escort Our Armadas Now

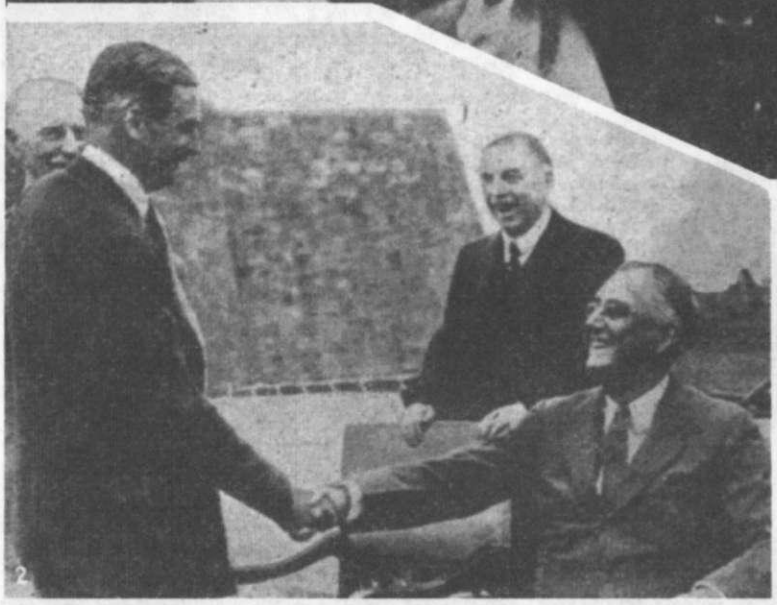




MECHANIZED LANDING CRAFT are the carriers of modern assault troops, whether it be on a Commando raid or full-scale invasion, such as Sicily, where they did great service in ferrying and landing men, armour and supplies. Some of these craft at exercise "in line ahead" (1) are escorted by their landing-craft support ships (marked L.C.S.) and protected by indispensable air cover (3). L.C.S. vessels are floating pillboxes (2), equipped with five machine-guns, Lewis gun and mortar.

Photos, News Chronicle, Fox

'Decisions are Taken for the Forward Action—

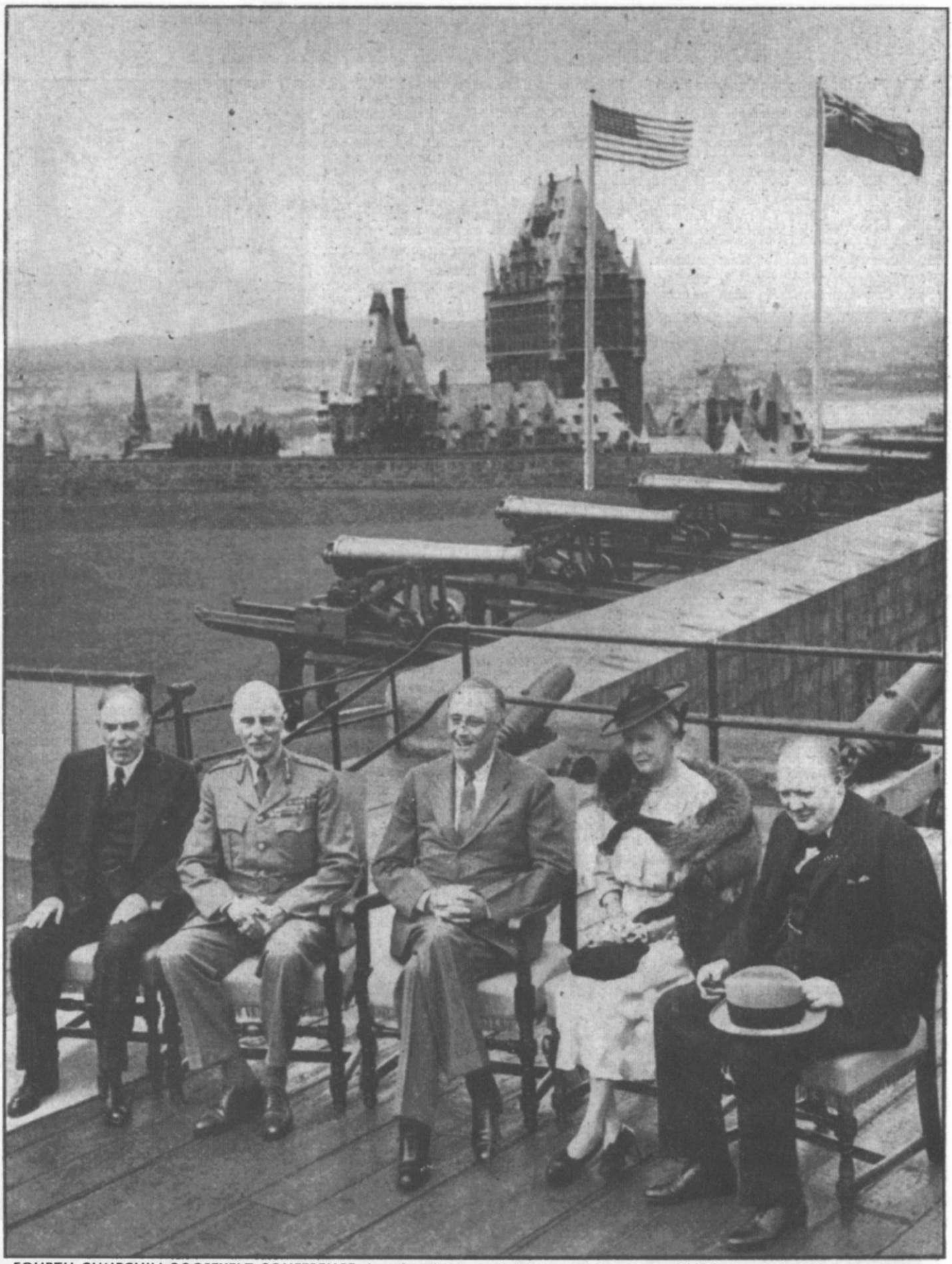


QUEBEC CONFERENCE, AUGUST 1943. At Hotel Frontenac (1): (front left) Lord Louis Mountbatten, Chief of Combined Operations; Adm. of the Fleet Sir D. Pound, Chief of Naval Staff; Gen. Sir A. Brooke, Chief of Imp. Gen. Staff; Air Chief-Marshal Sir C. Portal, Chief of Air Staff; Lt.-Gen. Sir H. Ismay, Chief of Staff to Min. of Defence; Air Marshal L. S. Breadner, Canadian Chief of Air Staff (just visible); Vice-Adm. Percy Nelles, Canadian Chief of Naval Staff; Lt.-Gen. R. Stuart, Canadian Army Chief of Staff.

Earl of Athlone and Mr. Mackenzie King watch Mr. Eden greet Mr. Roosevelt (2). Canadian Mounted Police on duty (3) when Mr. Churchill arrived at Quebec; crowds cheering him (4) on his way there.

Photos, British Official; Keystone

—Of Our Two Fleets, Armies and Air Forces'



FOURTH CHURCHILL-ROOSEVELT CONFERENCE since America entered the war ended on August 24, 1943 with the inspiring announcement : " The necessary decisions have been taken to provide for the forward action of the fleets, armies and air forces of the two nations." Conference had for its setting the historic Citadel of Quebec, on the terrace of which are Prime Minister and President, with Mr. Mackenzie King, Premier of Canada (extreme left) ; Earl of Athlone, Governor-General of Canada : and Countess of Athlone.

Photo, British Official

The Coastal Eyes of Britain Never Close

Every yard of our 6,000-mile coastline is under the surveillance of sentinels of the Coastguard Service, founded over 100 years ago with the suppression of smuggling as its primary duty. As revealed here by JOHN ALLEN GRAYDON, in an interview with Capt. Vernon Rashleigh, Chief Inspector of Coastguards, the war has brought these men many new and important tasks.

"WITH the enemy sending over hit-and-run raiders Coastguards, who rarely take their eyes off the sea, are often able to give warning as aircraft sweep towards the coast, just above the waves"—hoping to avoid our radiolocation—"and have on several occasions passed on information, through the Royal Observer Corps, which has resulted in the destruction of the raider," Captain Vernon Rashleigh, C.B.E., R.N., Chief Inspector of Coastguards, told me when I recently talked with him in his office at the Ministry of War Transport.

"Not so very long ago," he continued, "one Coastguard, having seen an enemy machine heading for the coast, hurried into his look-out hut and seized the telephone to the Observer Corps. As he was phoning the German plane machine-gunned the Coastguard look-out. So he dived beneath the table, taking the telephone with him, and there completed his report. I know you rarely hear of the work of the Coastguard Service, but I assure you there is not a yard of our 6,000-mile coastline the approaches to which are not under constant watch."

THE tasks carried out by the Coastguards are many and varied. Today they are more than six times stronger than at the outbreak of war, and they work in close cooperation with the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force. When invasion closely threatened this country the Coastguards, who carried arms, never ceased their vigilance; and now, though the threat of invasion has receded, they are taking no chances.

In the course of my duties as a war correspondent, I have made extensive travels around Britain and had opportunities of seeing these Coastguards at work. Having a great interest in the Dover area—which I named "Hellfire Corner" during the Battle of Britain—I asked Captain Rashleigh which, in his opinion, was the busiest locality. "It's not hard to answer that," he said. "Those stations on the East and South-East coast, closest to the enemy shores, have probably seen as much action as any others in the country."

The Coastguards know every danger to shipping around the coast of the United Kingdom, and are ready, day and night, to bring aid to a stranded vessel or plane forced down into the sea. These khaki-clad sentinels, to be successful at their job, must possess keen powers of observation, initiative and resource, and the ability to size up a situation rapidly. In addition, the Coastguardsman must be something of a detective. At least, I gathered that these qualifications were necessary for success when I heard a few stories of the deeds of these men.

"ALTHOUGH the Coastguard Service was formed over a hundred years ago for the purpose of running smugglers to earth, this is no longer one of our duties," Captain Rashleigh told me. "Our principal peacetime duty, although not by any means the only one, is the provision of a watch on the coast for the safeguard of shipping. The war, so far from diminishing our duties, has added many new ones, which, for security reasons, I cannot disclose.

"One which can be mentioned, however, is that of watching for enemy minelayers. As you know, the Germans use aircraft in large numbers for this purpose. The Coastguard, in conjunction with other Services, plot the positions in which mines are laid, and report to the nearest Naval authority.

"I know one Coastguard who for several weeks used to watch a German plane dive low and drop its mines—a cargo worth anything up to £500. Not a shot was fired by either the anti-aircraft guns in the district or by fighter planes. They just allowed the German to waste his precious mines while the Coastguards marked on a map the spot mined. Next morning the sea-lanes were again swept successfully! This went on for some considerable time, until the enemy machine was one afternoon surprised and shot down into the sea," Capt. Rashleigh went on. "Our men can be relied upon to spot the majority of planes that crash into the sea within telescopic range, and by a close understanding with the Air-Sea Rescue Service have helped to save many airmen."

I asked Captain Rashleigh if there were many veterans among the men of the Coastguards. "Yes," he answered, "quite a number of men have returned from retirement to play a part in the war. I know one old fellow of seventy-two who still rides on horseback three miles to and from his station every day. He's as keen as any youngster.

OLD AND THE NEW. Coastguards now wear battledress in place of the peacetime "navy cut," and on duty a steel helmet replaces the peaked cap (see photograph below). *Photo, Sport & General*

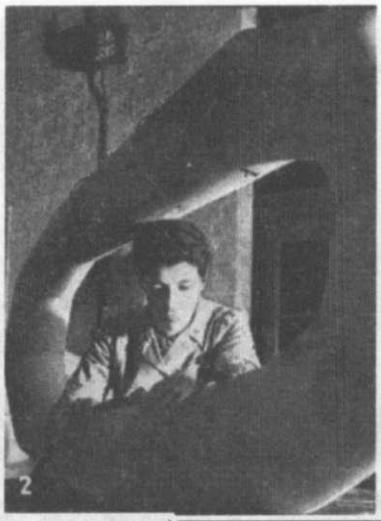
"Our Coastguards, when patrolling the various beaches, often make some very interesting discoveries," he continued. "It should not be forgotten that the contents of the pockets of a dead German airman or sailor, washed ashore, can sometimes provide interesting information about the enemy. But then, as I told you earlier, the Coastguards have so many jobs."

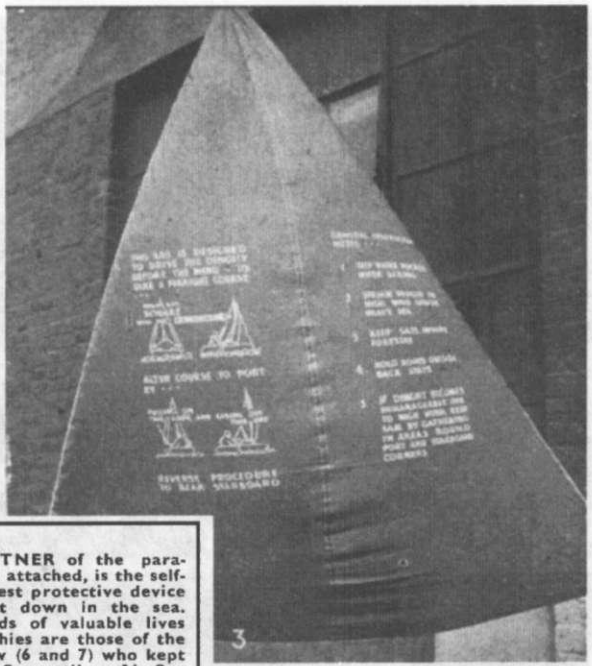
I THINK one of the best stories of the Coastguard Service is connected with the steam trawler Nordale when she ran ashore in Scotland. The local Life-Saving Rocket Company, under very difficult conditions, landed seven of the trawler's crew and hauled them over a ridge 850 feet above sea-level to safety. They were then conveyed by a farmcart, through a blinding storm, to a shepherd's cottage, where they were given warmth and refreshment. Most of the rescuers gave the seamen some of their own clothing, and every man of those rescued lived to put to sea again.

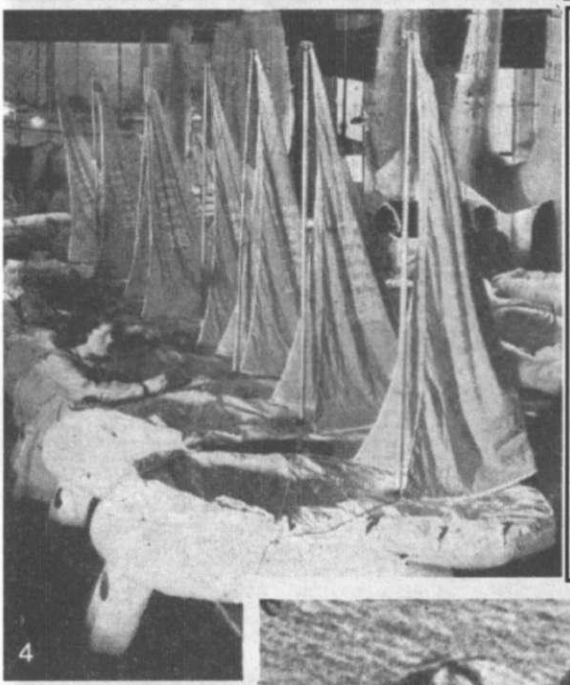
In the past year life-saving appliances were in action at various parts of the coast on 56 occasions, and 458 lives were saved by these means. On 700 occasions life-saving action has been taken to assist vessels or aircraft in distress. It can be said that the "Eyes of Britain" never close, for, to quote Captain Rashleigh: "Whatever takes place off the shores of this island interests the Coastguard Service." When the full story of its work can be told, the public will learn to what a tremendous extent this Service is assisting in the national effort.

INTERNATIONAL SIGNALS is the subject of the lecture to which these Coastguards are listening. The lecturer, Mr. R. J. Green, made the models in his spare time. Wartime work of the Coastguards—now under an Order in Council, ranking as members of the Armed Forces—is described above. *Photo, Keystone*

Self-Inflating Dinghy Is Airmen's Life-Saver







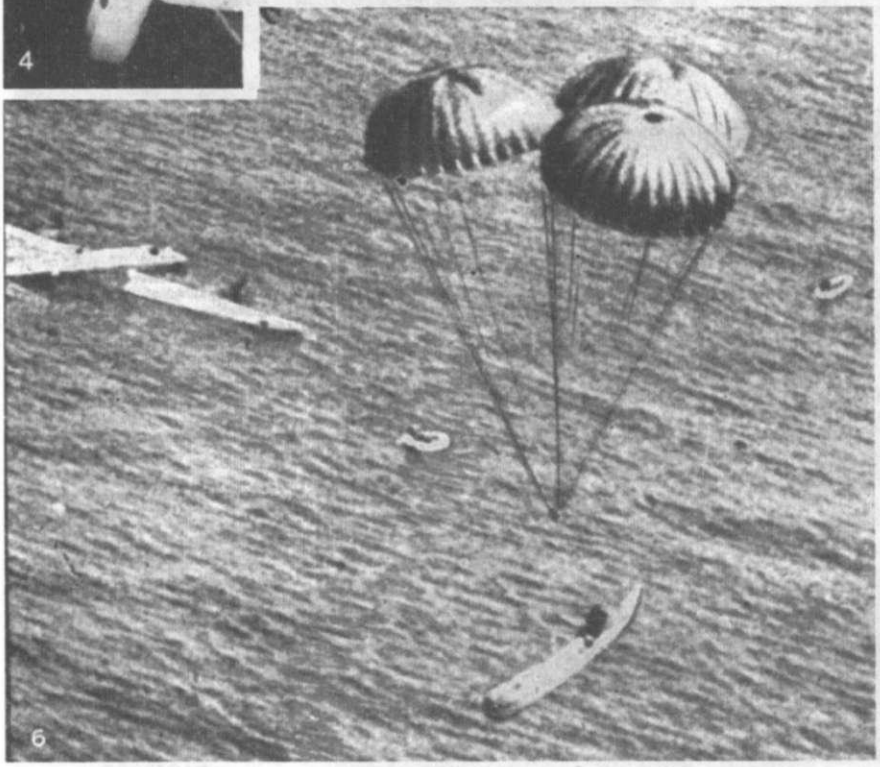
LIFE-SAVING PARTNER of the parachute, to which it is attached, is the self-inflating dinghy, latest protective device for airmen brought down in the sea. Typical of thousands of valuable lives saved by these dinghies are those of the Flying Fortress crew (6 and 7) who kept afloat in the North Sea until an Air Sea Rescue plane could drop them a lifeboat equipped with an engine and borne by three parachutes.

Behind such a rescue are much ingenious designing and brilliant factory work: cutting out the parts in several thicknesses (1), testing the inflation of the buoyancy chamber (2) and final checking of the finished dinghies (4).

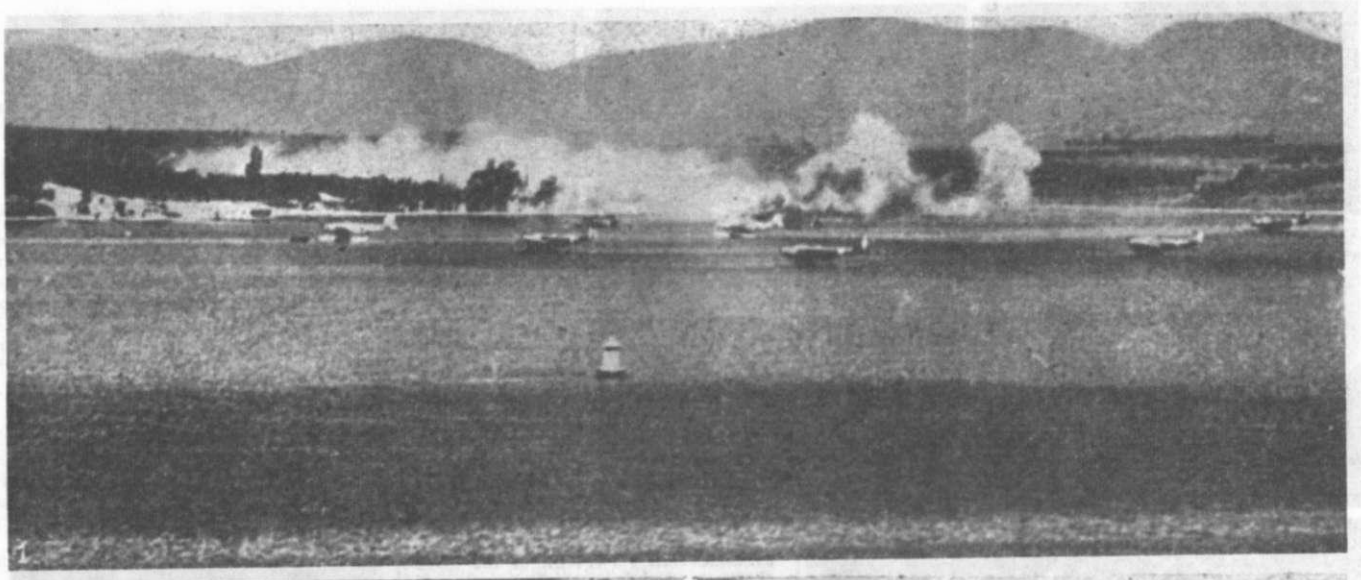
The sail, with its clearly imprinted and very simple instructions for use (3), and the hood with apron attached to give protection from weather and sea (5), are further evidence of painstaking planning.

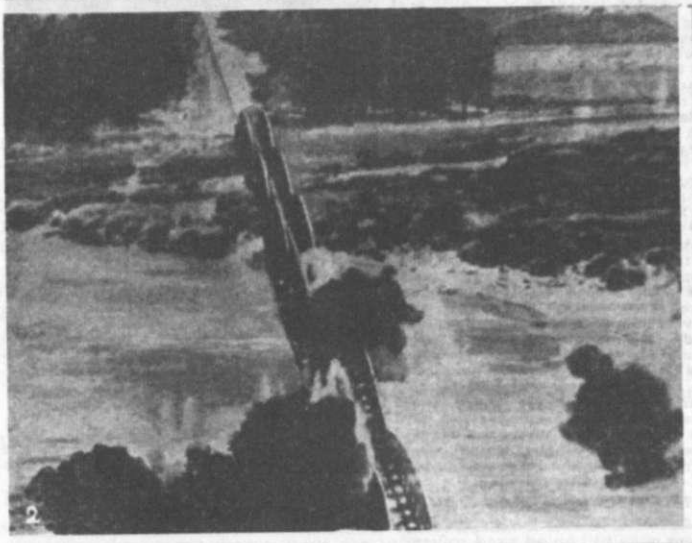
Deflated, the complete dinghy goes into a small canvas bag fitted beneath the parachute harness. The airman normally sits on it, and in emergency pulls a rip-cord, similar to that of his 'chute, thus opening a cylinder of compressed air inside the dinghy; this bursts the canvas bag and inflates the dinghy, which takes shape automatically and rests on the sea awaiting the dropping airman.

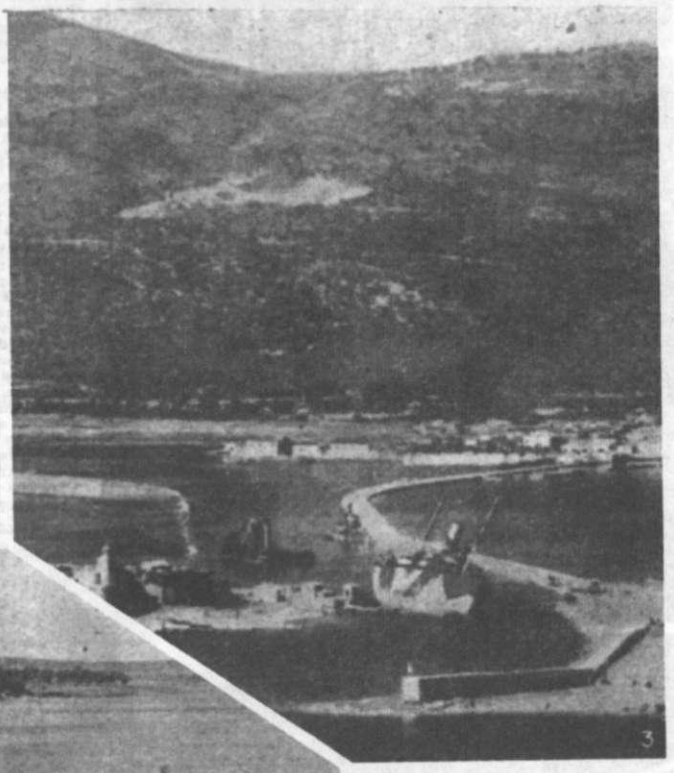
Photos, British Official ; Pictorial Press.

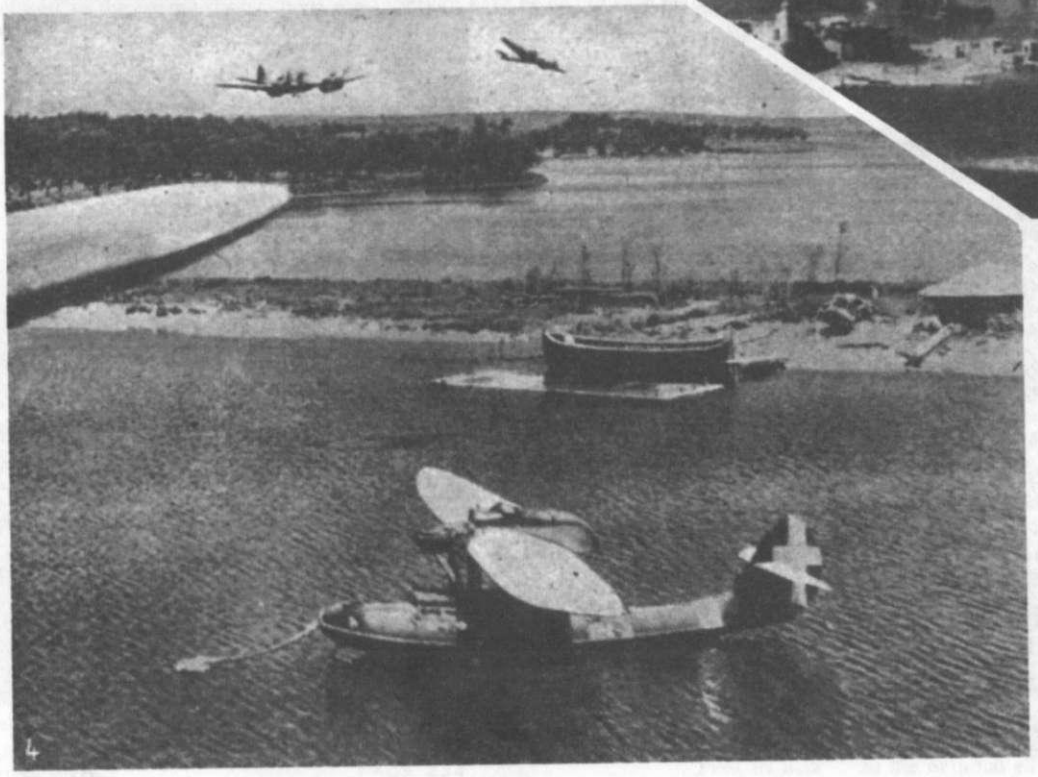


R.A.F. Is Loosening the Axis Grip on Greece









GREECE GETS A SHARE of the Allied air offensive on Europe, now surpassing anything the Nazis dreamed of. Preveza, enemy seaplane base on the west coast of Greece, had a visit from R.A.F. Wellingtons and Beaufighters on August 12, 1943; there is much smoke from the base and enemy planes are on fire (1), while fate is approaching this moored Italian Cant Z501 flying-boat (4) about to be attacked by Beaufighters.

To a famous Middle East fighter squadron was allotted the job of destroying by bomb and cannon an important bridge across the River Alpheios, near Pyrgos: smoke obscures the result (2).

Enemy shipping in the canal between Levkas and Acarnania is a target for Beaufighters (3).

The four months' air blockade of the Aegean and Ionian Seas has practically stopped Axis shipping plying between Italy and Greece.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

These Boys Gave Berlin Its Fiercest Battering

HEAVIEST R.A.F. RAID on Berlin was carried out on the night of August 23-24, 1943, at a cost of 58 bombers out of a fleet of some 700—highest price Bomber Command has ever paid for an assault on the Nazi war machine. Late reports indicate that about one tenth of the German capital's area was severely damaged.

R.A.F. men detailed to participate in this epic raid hear a few last words from their commander before setting out (1) Some of their machines—Stirlings—are silhouetted against the darkening sky as they take off (2). The 1,200-mile trip completed, air-crews report (4) on their achievements over the target shown on the map (right). Heaviest damage was inflicted in the Charlottenburg and Wilmersdorf districts.

Berliners, who had been fearing such a visitation, are hastily evacuating (3).

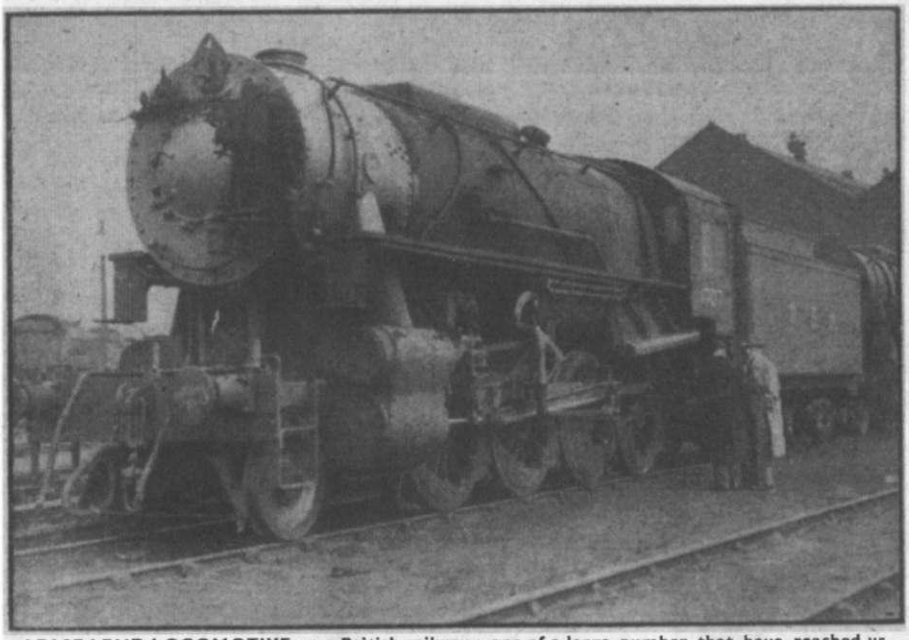
Map by courtesy of The Daily Telegraph; Photos, British Official; Fox, Planet News

Railways Are Vital in Our Invasion Schemes

Swift transport by railway will be to us a matter of supreme importance when we invade the mainland of Europe. Why, then, are we battering Axis rail communications? The answer is supplied by DONALD COWIE, who explains also why an efficient "steel road" is regarded almost as a trump card by commanders in the field.

SOME folk may have been puzzled by our perpetual bombing of European railways, by preparations to send British and American rolling-stock to Europe, by references to the inadequacy of rail facilities. Aren't modern armies mechanized and independent of fixed lines of communication, they ask?

Consider these facts. To move a modern infantry division by road 4,165 three-ton lorries are required; 1,216 trucks will do the same job by rail. One steam locomotive will haul as much as 66 petrol engines could pull. Much less fuel is required for rail transport per ton of freight. It might be difficult to believe, but railways are less susceptible to bombing than roads: such has been the experience so far in this war. Damaged portions of the permanent way can be quickly repaired with sectional parts, whereas great craters in and around roads sometimes take a long while to fill, especially in bad weather.



LEASE-LEND LOCOMOTIVE on a British railway: one of a large number that have reached us from U.S.A. It is specially intended for use on the Continental lines when we land our armies in Nazi-held Europe. The tremendous importance of efficient rail facilities in connexion with military operations is explained in this page. *Photo, Keystone*

It is as fallacious to think that modern armies can do without railways as to believe that the modern infantryman never has to perform long marches. Each major campaign so far has—partly at least—been a battle for rail communications, and lines and stations have often attracted the fiercest fighting. Battle of France accounts gave us the impression that tank columns on roads won the day; they certainly struck the decisive blows, but hundreds of German tanks were brought forward by railway, and the campaign followed the principal French lines, even to Dunkirk, Calais and Abbeville.

THIS is the sort of thing that often happened. A body of Canadians journeyed halfway across France in a commandeered train, hoping to take part in the fight. They stopped at one station, to discover that the town was surrounded by Germans. The French driver refused to make a dash through the cordon, so the Canadians restarted the locomotive themselves. A rifle was poked out of every window in readiness, and A.A. guns pointed skywards from the tender and every truck. With throttle wide open the train tore past the dangerous area and did not stop till safety was reached at an unoccupied Channel port. The Canadians said afterwards that they were more scared of missing the points or colliding with another train than of German shells and bullets.

THREE years later the incident was repeated in S. Tunisia. But this was a more daring exploit. An American officer heard there were a number of locomotives and wagons in Gafsa, then occupied by Rommel. He took a few men and a truck, dashed past enemy patrols to Gafsa Station, hooked-up thirteen locomotives and a good many wagons, and steamed back to safety with them! During this return journey the train continually ran the gauntlet of Germans with guns; once some tanks fired on the racing procession at close range. But a railway train was again shown to be a tough moving target.

Why could Wavell mount that amazing Libyan offensive in 1940? The answer is that he had rail communications with Alexandria and Cairo leading right up to his starting-point at Mersa Matruh. The Italians, who had neglected to construct a railway through Cyrenaica, could never bring heavy supplies forward so quickly. Afterwards, the Libyan campaigns always came back to that all-important tentacle of desert railway. Alamein was one of the final railway stations before the Nile Valley, and the stand and the battle there were conditioned by the presence of the steel road. (See illus. p. 16 and p. 101, Vol. 6.)

Then the advance to Tripoli was greatly assisted by an extension of that Libyan line across the 200 miles from Mersa Matruh to Tobruk. (See illus. p. 713, Vol. 5.) But the Tunisian campaign nearly foundered on the railway problem.

Study a railway map of North Africa and you will see why Von Arnim could hold us at bay for so long. From Bizerta and Tunis he had several good lines running to such places as Mateur, Medjez-el-Bab and Pont du Fahs—and there petering out. We had a single line crossing the border from Bône to La Calle, and after that only road—hundreds of miles of bad road. The Germans could convey their troops and heavy material swiftly to the various fronts on smooth lines. We had to accumulate supplies painfully, each convoy a long-distance expedition.

Nevertheless, that campaign followed the railways to the end. Will our men ever forget the fighting which swept up and down the north coast-line, beginning at Tabarka and passing through Tamera and Sejenane to Mateur? The Eighth Army came up another railway via Gabes, Sfax and Sousse to Enfidaville. Of 1,200 miles of track in Tunisia some 800 miles was held by Von Arnim to the last, 200 miles was our meagre portion, and the other 200 was in no man's land.

YET such is the ease with which railways can be repaired that within periods varying from two hours to ten days all the Axis and no man's land lines were restored to full working order by our engineers after the victory. Observers described the repair work as similar to Meccano construction. All the spare parts had been brought forward in readiness and just had to be bolted together; 350 freight wagons and 64 locomotives had been imported from the United States, 50 wagons and six locomotives from Britain, to make up for rolling-stock held by the Germans that we had very accurately bombed.

Vital Strategic Arteries.

A study of the Russian war map will reveal how both German and Russian strategy has consistently followed the railways since the beginning of the struggle. The recent German offensive was aimed primarily at Kursk, one of the most important railway junctions between Moscow and Kharkov. Orel is another Clapham Junction of those parts, also Bryansk and Byelgorod, and nearly all the familiar names.

Follow the war East and you will find that the most important feature of Persia today is a railway whereby British locomotives and British engineers enable supplies to reach Russia via the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea. The Indian line from Calcutta to Sadiya in remote Assam right up against the Himalayas and near China is now one of the most vital strategic arteries in the world. A tenuous line across the dead heart of Australia from the populated parts to Darwin enables the defenders of Northern Territory to maintain their defences.

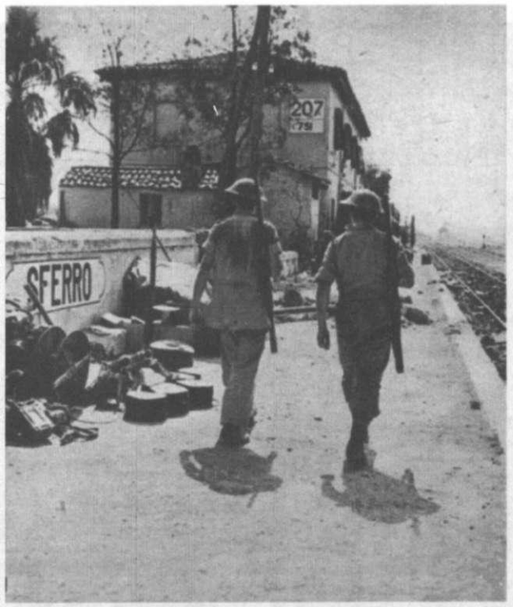
WHEN it is realized that Army Movement Control was running 1,000 special trains a month to the South Coast prior to Dunkirk, and 2,000 during that disaster (one every ten minutes from Dover), some idea will be obtained of the extent of tomorrow's traffic—when the Army proceeds towards France again. For ambulance purposes alone several hundred passenger trains have already been converted. Scores of locomotives stand ready, possibly to replace on French railways those that our fighter pilots have been shooting up so assiduously during the last three years. We are on our way to smashing the railway system of north-western Europe, causing the Germans much confusion; but we must be ready tomorrow to effect a speedy restoration, or be stuck ourselves.

It will be seen, therefore, that railways do remain one of the most important transport factors in modern war. Motor transport is an indispensable auxiliary—but no more than an auxiliary as yet.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Sicilian Mountain Stronghold Stormed

The steep, rocky slopes of picturesque Centuripe were desperately defended by Axis troops, and the struggle for this town at the top of a mountain was waged furiously for days. It was finally taken by assault on August 5, 1943 by men of the 78th Division—Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and the London Irish, who had learned their mountain fighting in Tunisia and perfected their street fighting in Centuripe. Above, Bren carriers are taking supplies into the captured town.



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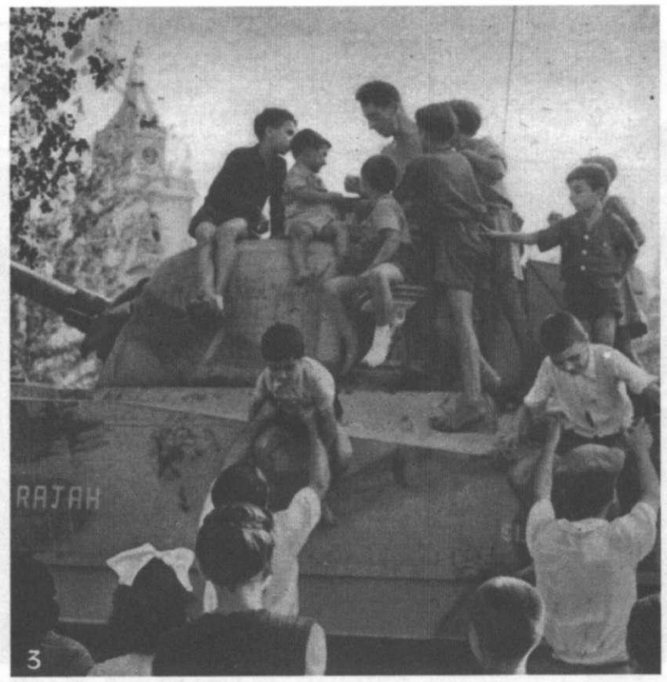

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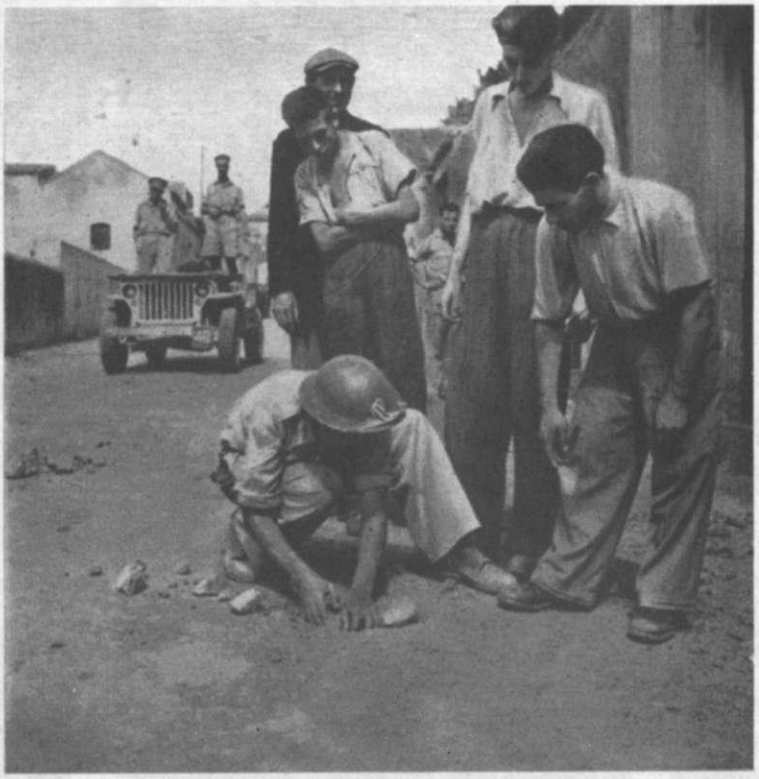
Photos, British Official Crown Copyright

From Sferro Station to Triumph in Catania

Commanding an important crossroad leading to Catania, Sferro was shelled by Allied artillery before our troops marched in; two 8th Army men are patrolling the battered railway station (1). Catania itself fell on August 5; Sherman tanks are passing through the Via Garibaldi (2), while farther down the same thoroughfare an infantry patrol negotiates welcoming crowds (4), some of whom, carrying bundles of personal belongings, are once again returning to their homes.

No Fear of the British in Their Hearts

Happy Sicilian youngsters swarmed unchecked over 8th Army tanks (3) in Catania's crowded streets, delighted with the free and novel entertainment and the cheery good humour of British tank-crews. Every gun team that entered the town, now freed of Nazi and Fascist taint, was greeted with hand-clapping and cheers from onlookers (5) overjoyed at the appearance of their liberators—conquerors of the last great Nazi stronghold on the east coast road to Messina.



Hot on the Heels of the Enemy

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

On August 5 British troops passed through the town of Misterbianco (top left), beyond Catania, in pursuit of the retreating enemy; Sicilians who knew where German mines had been placed to delay the 8th Army's progress revealed the presence of these death-traps and watched—and admired—whilst our men skilfully removed them (top right). Inniskilling Fusiliers (bottom) move up to Catenanuova, whence they launched their successful assault on Centuripe (see p. 239).

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

ALMOST everyone in this country is still puzzled and uneasy about the French in North Africa. This puzzlement began when Admiral Darlan "ratted" from Vichy and was accepted as a collaborator by General Eisenhower. It was heightened by the mystery kept up about the Admiral's assassination. It is still being deepened by inability to understand what are the differences between Generals de Gaulle and Giraud, and which of the two the British and American Governments prefer.

It is useful, therefore, to have some first-hand information on this subject. Mr. Guy Ramsey, one of the News Chronicle's war correspondents, went to North Africa with the expedition last year and stayed there for some time. He knew all the parties concerned. He is able to tell us in his book One Continent Redeemed (Harrap, 8s. 6d.—ready shortly) a good deal that helps to make the situation more intelligible. He quotes Gen. Eisenhower as saying that the whole of the French authorities in North Africa looked to Darlan for orders and would not act unless he told them to do this or that.

The General declared he hated politics; he has no feeling in the matter except that he wished to arrange matters so as to help and not hinder the Allied war effort. All who had been in Algeria for any length of time agreed that Darlan was a pill, not a pleasant pill, which must be swallowed.

HE himself was under no illusions as to what sort of reputation he had, not only with the Allied commanders but among the populace. He turned his coat because he saw it would pay him best to do so, just as he worked for Hitler when that seemed the most profitable line for him to take. He was easy to get on with because he was ready to do anything asked of him. He wanted to show that he was really earning his money. No one, says Mr. Ramsey, could compare Darlan with Giraud, who succeeded him.

Their very photographs make it plain that one was a time-server, while the other is a man of unshakable and unbreakable integrity. But it was easier to work with Darlan than with Giraud, and there was genuine regret among the authorities when Darlan was killed. The crime was committed, according to Mr. Ramsey, by a Royalist, that is a Frenchman who would like to see a king in France again. The pretender to the throne is the Count of Paris; he was said to be not far away when the murderer fired his shots. He lives usually in the outskirts of Tangier.

THE Royalists are described as being numerous in the French army of North Africa, especially among the higher officers. It would be interesting to know whether Gen. Giraud has any sympathy with the Bourbon cause. The Royalists call Gen. de Gaulle "traitor," "outlaw," "careerist," and other abusive names. They say he put himself outside the law when he set up a sort of government opposed to Vichy. Dissensions among the French in Algeria make it hard to believe they can ever agree about anything.

Many of those who were loudest in their welcome of the Allies would have given just as warm a reception to the Nazis. They had no motive but self-interest. But for several months American consular officials had been making inquiries and keeping in close touch with everything that went on, so we had a good idea, when the invasion started, as to who were our real friends.

Gen. Eisenhower struck Mr. Ramsey as a man of understanding, a skilful negotiator, conciliatory and endowed with the gift of making people who talk to him think they must be extremely intelligent and well-informed. He talks a great deal himself, with the intelligence of a University don and the fluency of a Rotarian speaker. At first he was distrusted as a military commander. The Guards and the Hampshire battalions were sent forward in a hurry without adequate supply arrangements. There was relief when Gen. Alexander was associated with him in the high command. But he is a favourite with the correspondents because he takes them into his confidence, treats them as Moulders of Public Opinion (the tones of his voice supply the capital letters!) and, unlike most British generals, he thinks that News really matters.

After Darlan: What Has Happened in North Africa

Of Gen. Giraud Mr. Ramsey gives a vivid sketch that brings him before the reader in clear outline. He is in appearance the typical French cavalry officer. His uniform verges on foppishness. He is tall and slight, very straight still. But his moustache is not so "swashbuckling and ferocious" as it looks in pictures, a smile plays round the corners of his mouth, his voice is high and light, he has a courteous, friendly manner.

His reason for maintaining that he was the man to lead the French in Africa amounted simply to this: he knew the country and the people, also he was known by the people; De Gaulle was not.

In Giraud's view they looked on De Gaulle with the gravest suspicion. That was wrong. The British were right in their support of De Gaulle. "I myself admire him, not only for his abilities as a soldier, but for what he has done from London. For two years he has spoken with the voice of France. That must never be forgotten."

De Gaulle apparently wanted a purge of all Vichy officials. In Giraud's view that would have caused a revolution with, he feared, slaughter on a vast scale—"the gutters of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, would have run with blood." It is significant that two of the very high officials whom he described to Mr. Ramsey as indispensable have since been dismissed and without any untoward consequences. Now that he has agreed to share the leadership, we must hope that all the energies of the French in Africa will be applied to winning the war.

The whole lay-out in this part of the world is difficult to understand, still more difficult to manage. The Arabs have to be bribed to turn against the Germans, who for so long bribed them to be on their side. They won them over chiefly by letting them have oil, which is essential to Arab cookery, when it was scarce. We pay them £40 for handing over a live spy, parachutist, or airman forced to land; £24 each for dead ones. That is the officer tariff; it is less for other ranks.

THE Arabs are not much good for hard, continuous labour—on getting damaged airfields into a usable state again, for example. They are slower and lazier than Europeans or Americans, and the language difficulty makes it a long business teaching them what to do. Also they are, in spite of their reputation for calm resignation to fate and disregard of danger, terrified of being killed. "They're quite undependable," a Royal Engineers colonel told Mr. Ramsey; "one bomb thirty miles away and they're off to the hills for a week!"

The account the book gives of our landing as seen from a ship is picturesque and lively. The writer especially admired the beach-masters for their magnificent organizing skill. They landed first in the dark and, waist-deep in water, worked for seventeen hours, using megaphones and shaded torches to guide the troops coming ashore, showing infinite patience and unbreakable good humour.

They lent their arms to soldiers weighed down by their heavy equipment, they carried burdens ashore which would otherwise have been lost in the sea, they pushed off craft that ran aground. It was largely due to them that the operation was carried out so smoothly and with very small losses.

GENERAL EISENHOWER, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in the Mediterranean theatre of war, tribute to whose work in resolving Free French differences in North Africa is paid in the book reviewed in this page. This striking portrait, by Mr. Henry Carr, is one of several new war pictures recently on view at the National Gallery, London.

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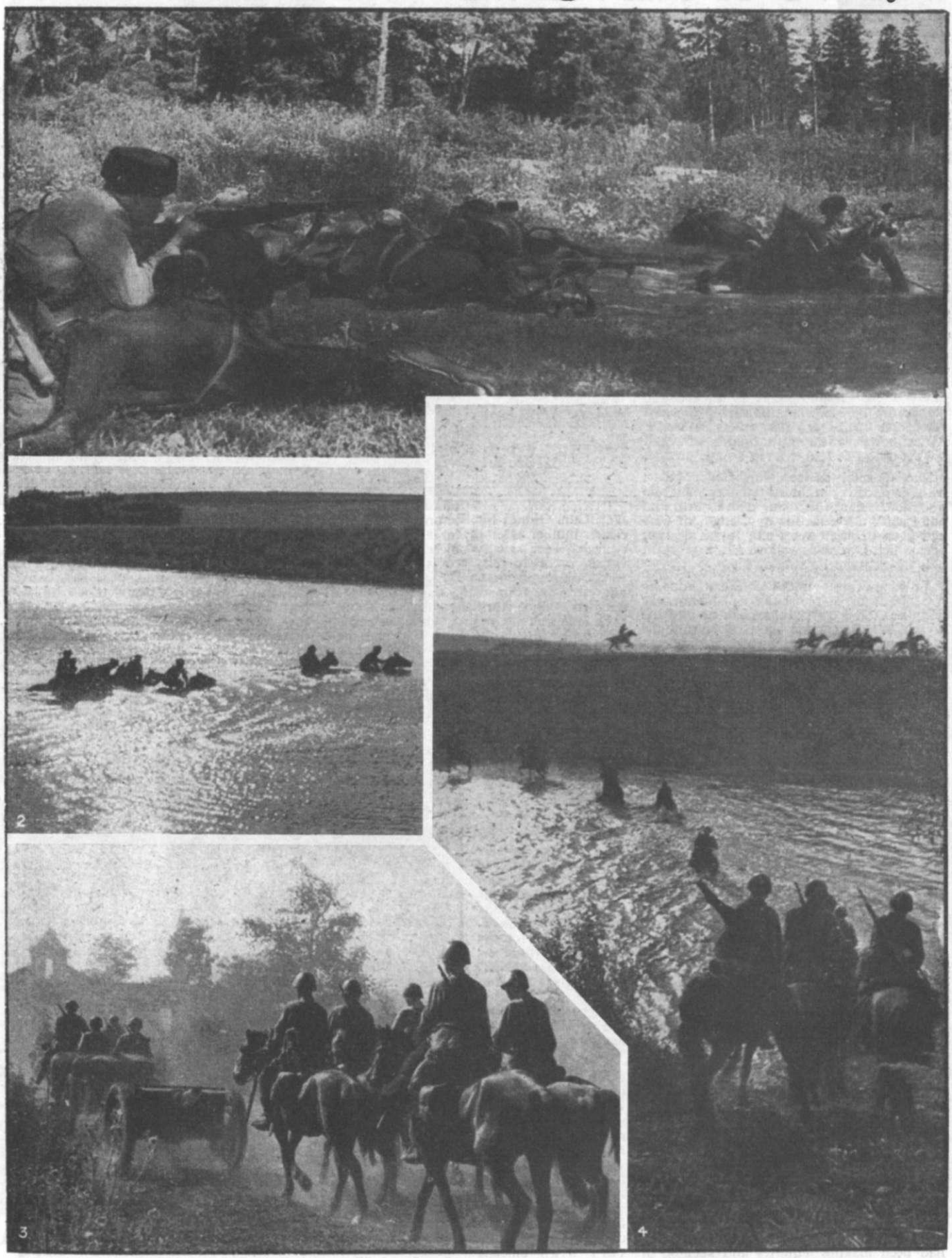
'The Cossacks Are Coming!' the Nazis Cry



'KOSSAKEN KOMMEN!' cried the Germans fleeing from Taganrog to Mariupol on August 30, 1943. Formidable horsemen warriors from the Don territory in S. Russia, the Kuban, the Urals and the Caucasian foothills, armed with modern guns in place of their traditional sabres, Cossacks are the terror of the harassed enemy. Don Cossacks take aim from the shelter of their superbly-trained horses (1), ford their native river, which is 1,169 miles long (2 and 4), and enter a village recaptured from the Nazis (3).

Photos, Pictorial Press—Exclusive to THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

Four Times In Battle Kharkov Changes Hands

VIOLENTLY CONTRASTING SCENES from the second city of the Ukraine, now once again in Russian hands. Before it first fell to the Nazis, in October 1941, Kharkov was Russia's greatest tank-producing centre. It also produced some 50,000 tractors a year and over 900,000 workers thronged its tree-lined streets (bottom). Before abandoning it to the enemy the Russians scorched it, and since then the city has changed hands three times in battle. The top photograph shows a tragic result : one of Kharkov's main squares as the Russians found it when they returned on February 16, 1943, to hold the city for a month only. See also p. 249.

Photos, Planet News, Pictorial Press

THE HOME FRONT

by E. Royston Pike

AUGUST is the traditional month of holidays; and this year, more than any of the previous wartime summers, it saw a great rush to the country and those parts of the coast where a strip of beach is open for picnics and bathes. They are hardy spirits, these holiday-makers, ready to put up with a deal of inconvenience and downright discomfort in order to have their break, their bit of fun, a change from the everyday routine and surroundings. Wireless and newspapers have told terrible tales of thousands of holidaymakers standing for hours in long queues, missing the last train, sleeping on the station platform. Such a holiday is not everybody's "cup of tea," but can we find it in our hearts to blame those who feel that they must "get away from it all for a bit"? Fifty-one weeks, perhaps seven days a week for a long stretch: so much work—then a week's play!

Yes, it's understandable enough; and more's the pity that apparently little or nothing can be done to make travelling a little easier for those who have decided that their journey *is* really necessary. The Government (Mr. Noel Baker, Parliamentary Secretary to the War Transport Ministry, has said) have every sympathy with the desire for holidays, fresh air, and change of scene, but they can provide extra trains only if they give up the priority accorded to essential military traffic. This, of course, they are not prepared to do. So far from victory abroad reducing the demands on our internal transport (he said on August 30), it increases them. To North Africa and Sicily we have to send from this country, along roads and railways to our ports, a constant stream of military and civilian supplies in addition to the large tonnage needed for the new and greater battles that lie ahead.

HEAVEN knows, the workers—most of them—have well deserved their break. "We are now producing a greater volume of goods than ever before in the history of our country, whether in war or in peace," declared Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, Minister of Production; and on August 30 he revealed that Britain's total output of munitions showed an increase of 25 per cent in the second quarter of 1943 over the same quarter of 1942, and the increase in structural weight of aircraft was 44 per cent compared with the previous year. Altogether, the combined war production of the United Nations is now three times that of the Axis—and next year it will be four times.

USUALLY workers on the Home Front are anonymous, but in a wireless talk given not long ago by a Colliery Manager there was a mention of "one man, known to his friends as Bart." He is a miner, standing 5ft. 4in. high in his socks, and weighing just 9½ stone, "a cheerful little fellow, full of the joy of life." In 1,205 shifts, 84 of them on Sundays, Bart has produced 21,511 tons of coal: every day he has worked he has produced only a fraction below 18 tons, which is equal to 300 times his own weight.

"Let's look at it in another way," went on the Manager. "In four years Bart has loaded the equivalent of 2,200 railway trucks of coal, or one whole train-load every four weeks. The vast quantity of coal raised by this one man is sufficient to provide the finished steel for the production of one heavy cruiser and two destroyers of the Tribal class. During the whole period of the War Bart has lost only one shift voluntarily. He has worked 7 days a week for 84 weeks, and his average for the whole war is 6 days per week, including holiday periods." Bart works in a North Midland pit. If he worked in Russia, he would be hailed enthusiastically as a Hero of Socialist Labour!

But in spite of such Herculeans as Bart, coal production is once again giving rise to acute anxiety, and it is now the official view that the industry is very much under-manned. So efforts are being made to recruit fresh workers for the pits. At the end of August the Ministry of Labour announced that the age limit of 25 for the exercise of the option for underground work in coal-mines was being abolished, and that men of all ages, unless they are in certain skilled categories, may volunteer for coal-mining when called up for service.

A week or so later an appeal for 30,000 volunteers for the mines was directed to men between 16 and 41 at present engaged in other civilian jobs. At this stage of the War it has been made clear that before we can win the Battle of Europe we must win the battle for coal, coal, and yet more coal.

COAL ARMY RECRUIT learns from an experienced miner at the New Lount Colliery, Coalville how to drill a shot-hole preparatory to inserting powder for blasting the coal face. The Battle for Coal is an indispensable complement to the Battle of Europe. *Photo, The Daily Telegraph*

THAT much-discussed subject the declining birth-rate came up for debate in the House of Commons a few weeks since. When this country entered the War in 1939 we had fewer children than in any year since 1876, when the population was only 24 millions, said Group-Capt. Wright; in 1971, when the population will be about the same as today, there will be 50 per cent more people over 45 than now and 100 per cent more over 65. On the other hand, the number of people of 45 and under will be only three-quarters of what it is today.

It does not require a super-intellect to appreciate the almost intolerable burden (went on Group-Captain Wright) of supporting this ever-increasing proportion in the higher ages, which is the inescapable destiny of the young people who are now fighting so gloriously for a better future. What is the reason for the fall? Mr. J. Griffiths, a Labour member from Wales, adduced the fear of poverty, insecurity and war; mothers are in revolt, he said, and motherhood must be made safer. "To be a mother in this country is more dangerous than to be a miner."

By way of contrast a Conservative stalwart, Sir F. Fremantle (he has since died), blamed women for wanting to earn money and have a career instead of stopping at home and raising a family. Mr. Maxton professed to be a little disgusted at the tone of the debate: much of the discussion concerning intimate and sacred human relations had been of the type which (he declared) he had heard from Ayrshire farmers talking about their Ayrshire cows! But he rebutted the charge that there was something unpatriotic or any dodging of responsibility in men not reproducing their species in the same degree as formerly.

Winding up the debate Mr. Ernest Brown, Minister of Health, said that he didn't think very much of the call for more babies: what we want is *better* babies. After all, a check in the growth of population was inevitable sooner or later.

AMONG the credit items in the balance sheet of war is the immense stimulation it affords to invention, not only of mechanical contrivances, but of industrial processes. Thus of late we have been learning a lot about what Sir John Bodinnar, Commercial Secretary to the Ministry of Food, has described as "putting food into battledress." By importing boned and moulded beef and telescoped mutton carcasses the shipping space saved last year compared with pre-War amounted to 41,000,000 cubic feet; by importing dried, instead of shell, egg, to about 22,500,000 cubic feet; and by importing milk powder, instead of tinned condensed milk, to about 1,000,000 cubic feet.

These figures represent a saving of about 750,000 tons, or the carrying capacity of seventy-five 10,000-ton ships—"a phantom convoy that did not sail." Still more interesting developments are in hand. Bacon from the U.S.A. will occupy less space in future, since it is to be sent across the Atlantic in bales weighing 5 lb. instead of packed in wooden boxes weighing 70 lb. More space will be saved by substituting chests made from Indian jute fibre instead of plywood in the carriage of tea.

Then, several dehydrated foods can be pressed into blocks without affecting their use or value. Thus dried egg can be reduced in volume by 30 per cent. Dried carrot, cabbage and potato are being similarly treated; dehydrated cheese, mixed with potato flour and compressed into blocks, is now being supplied to the troops. Dried meat has its storage life doubled by compression.

WHEN the Budget was given its third reading in the Commons, the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave a well-deserved pat on the back to the taxpayer. There never has been a time, he said, when the people of this country paid their taxes so willingly and so promptly. Nearly two thousand years ago Tacitus, the Roman historian, recorded of the inhabitants of Britain that they were good taxpayers unless they were exasperated by official insolence. That, declared the Chancellor, is true today. His lieutenant, Mr. Assheton, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, announced that the National Debt now stands at £17,700 millions.

We are borrowing as much money every eight weeks now as was borrowed during the whole period of the Napoleonic wars. At the end of the wars conducted by the great Duke of Marlborough the National Debt had reached a figure in the neighbourhood of £53 millions, a sum which we should spend, said Mr. Assheton, between then and the end of the following week. One of the principal objects of high taxation is to minimize the burden of the Debt after the War; what is not being raised by taxation is being borrowed, and the Chancellor might well remark on "the wonderful effort made by the people of the country in voluntary savings."

Our New 5·5 Gun-Howitzer is Now an Open Secret

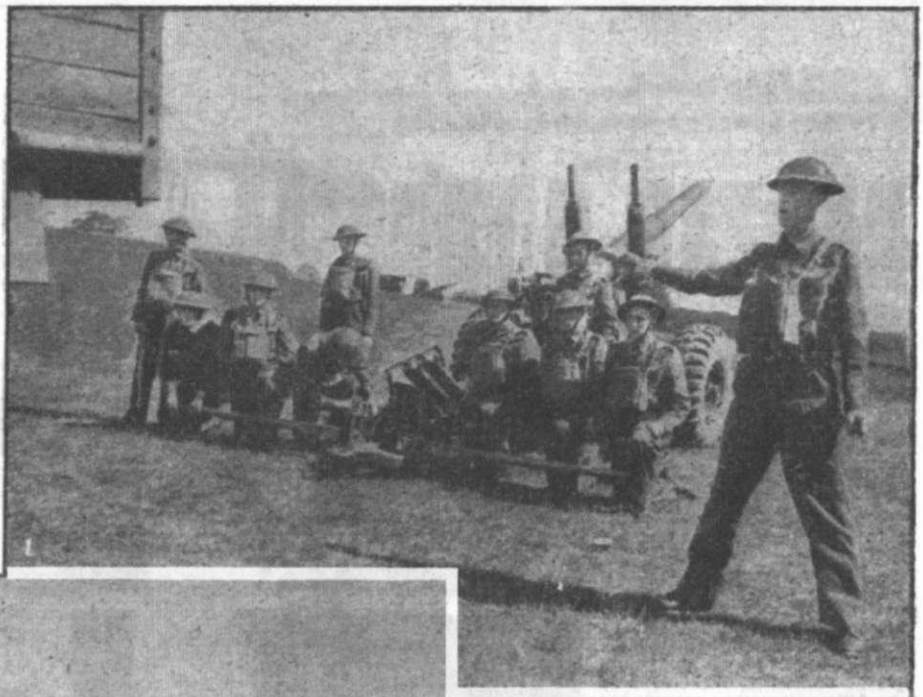
A TUNISIAN secret was revealed when official details of the new British 4·5-in. and 5·5-in. medium guns were made available.

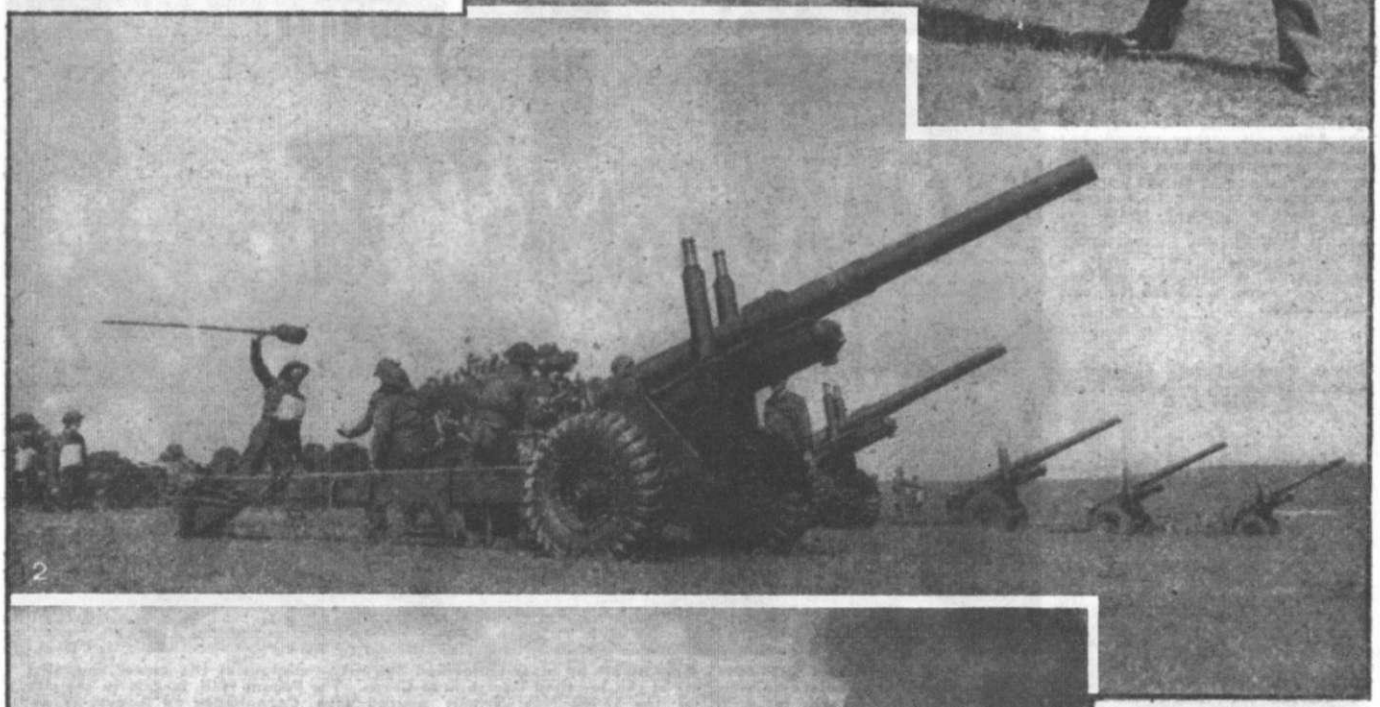
"On the six-mile front of attack we had a 25-pounder gun, or better, to every 23 yards," Mr. Churchill declared in his statement to the House of Commons at the beginning of our victorious sweep through North Africa. The world now knows what the words "or better" implied. They meant these new guns, which both fit the equally new dual service gun-carriage.

We had waited a long time for these splendid products of British engineering, and it was fortunate that they were available just when they were needed. For at the beginning of the war Germany outclassed us in this type of field gun, and after Dunkirk, when the British Army had to be almost completely re-equipped with artillery, second place had to be allotted to the medium gun for the time being; anti-aircrait weapons took priority.

But research went on—and now the 4·5-in. and 5·5-in. "gun-hows" are proving their worth against enemy armour and entrenchments. In four days of the Tunisian campaign, for example, the 5.5-in., which is illustrated in this page, accounted for 17 tanks destroyed and 24 probables—signal service indeed!

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright





'GUN-HOW NO. 1' in our present armament is the new 5·5-in., details of which have just been revealed.

Like the 25-pounder (see p. 460, Vol. 5,) it combines the functions of a howitzer and a high-velocity field gun, but it embodies vast improvements on the 25-pounder. The 5·5-in. can throw a 100-lb. projectile with devastating effect at a maximum range of over eight miles, exceeding its German counterpart by nearly 1,500 yards—a triumph of invention which has reversed the position at the beginning of the war, when we were quite outclassed by the Germans in medium artillery.

Royal Artillery men prepare to limber up their new gun to a backing lorry (1). On the practice range they have the 5·5-in. in position (2); the rammer is thrown back after the shell has been plunged home. When the gun is fired, like this one in Tunisia (3), note how the crew turn away to lessen the effect of the blast on their ear-drums—evidence of the gun's immense power.

Denmark Struggles to Break the Nazi Shackles

GIRL WITH ROUNDEL HAT—the colours are red, white and blue, a tribute to the R.A.F.—is questioned by a Danish policeman (centre) and a Nazi S.S. man.

THE DANES REVOLT after three years' passive subservience to the Nazi invader. Never has underground resistance, encouraged by the Allies, altogether ceased, but not until now has there been an uprising so spontaneous and widespread, demanding all the German resources of tyranny to suppress it, as these photographs show.

Traffic is at a standstill in the capital, Copenhagen (above), while police disperse crowds after a street fight. A policeman and two civilians were wounded in this disturbance.

Photos, Danish Council Information Office, Planet News, Associated Press, Topical Press

LOOT FROM THE DANES weighs down a Nazi soldier (below) as he goes on leave. German currency trickery enables the invaders to purchase (if they cannot otherwise acquire) luxuries unobtainable in their own country.

COPENHAGEN CITIZENS CHARGED by black-uniformed S.S. men—minions of the terror specialist, Himmler—assisted by members of the so-called Danish Free Corps. The Forum Hall, largest in the city, an ideal barracks for some of the 50,000 Nazi troops poured into Copenhagen on August 20, and Denmark's largest aluminium factory are both reported to have been destroyed by saboteurs.

IN DENMARK the Nazis have thrown off the mask they have worn since they entered the country on April 9, 1940. When even the pro-German Premier Scavenius was unable to meet their demands they overthrew the Danish Government, imprisoned King Christian and imposed martial law. Denmark now joins her sister-nation Norway in servitude.

This Nazi move on August 29, 1943 was the culmination of a wave of strikes, riots and sabotage. Thus came to an end the three years' farce that Denmark was a perfect example of willing cooperation in the Nazi New Order—Hitler's "Model Protectorate." The German demand for the death penalty for patriotic saboteurs was the final outrage: Danish 'cooperation' would not go to that shameful length. And so at last the velvet glove came off to reveal the Nazi mailed fist.

The Navy resisted to the last. Part of the fleet got away to the neutrality of Swedish ports, but the flagship Niels Iuel and the Peder Skram did not manage to escape (see p. 230).

DANISH WORKER BEATEN UP by German soldiers. A sight only too familiar in cities under the Nazi heel, and one that is now stirring even good-tempered, once passively resistant Danes to active fury against their oppressors.

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

Fire and Ruin Marked the Road to Kharkov

After one of the greatest battles of this war Kharkov, city of the Ukraine, was finally wrested from the Germans by the Red Army on August 23, 1943. Stories of scenes along the approaches to and in the town, given in Soviet broadcasts, appear here by arrangement with The Evening Standard.

It is a clear, sunny August day. We are moving along the road to Kharkov. Only a few months ago there were factories working over there. There were people in the houses about the factories. Nothing is now left either of the factories or the houses. There are fires and ruins and more fires springing up even now.

There is the wreckage of tanks and guns on this road—the road to Kharkov. Masses of twisted metal, the burnt debris of war. There is a great cloud of smoke over the town. The special German detachments have set fire to many more buildings. Now we reach a signpost. It is yellow, with great black letters written on it. It is written in German, but we can understand what is written. It is the boundary post: THIS IS KHARKOV.

In another broadcast a Pravda correspondent described how the Russians occupied the fortified area around Kharkov:

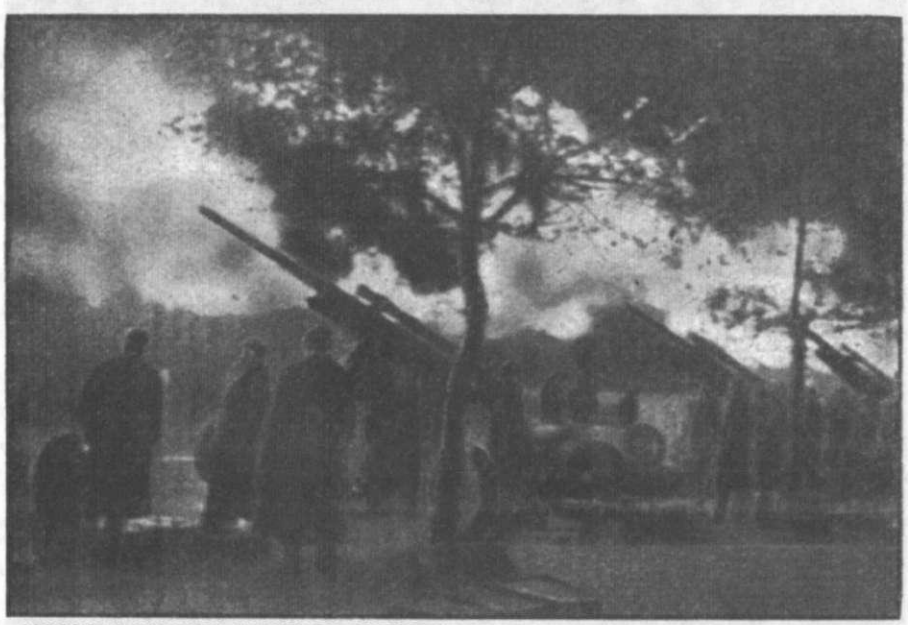
Through this gateway our troops began to pour and advanced at the rate of nine to eleven miles a day. Our tanks, infantry and artillery worked together. Two hundred guns were together in action over a distance of little more than half a mile. If the infantry were held up the artillery opened with a withering fire. If there was a further hold-up, our aeroplanes came swooping in to blast the enemy positions.

Our main forces concentrated in a forest area. Sometimes our men had to work their way through with an axe. They carried their ammunition in their hands. One of our flanking units worked through the forests for 18 hours to make a surprise attack. The vanguard, with their commander, Rudnik, at the head, broke through to the northern area of Kharkov after covering a distance of more than 130 miles. Street fighting started immediately and then began the third, the most heroic and the most intense phase of the battle for the city.

While the vanguards fought on the outskirts, our main forces were encircling the city in a wide out-flanking movement. Gradually they enclosed Kharkov in a grip of iron which the enemy could not break.

The achievements of Orel, Byelgorod and now Kharkov were made possible by two things—the extraordinary gallantry and endurance of our troops and the qualities of leadership of our officers. The skilful movements of the Stalin school defeated the old German methods.

Another Soviet broadcaster said: The Germans mined every yard of the city. They sent 10,000 civilians to make tank ambushes. Houses inside the city were bristling with machine-guns and trench mortars. Our troops had to fight hard—for every yard, for every house. When we drove the Germans from the ground floors of the houses they retreated to the first floors and then to the second floors and so on.



MOSCOW SALUTES KHARKOV VICTORS with 20 volleys from 224 guns on the night of August 23, 1943. It was the city's second tribute to the Red Army, for on August 5, 120 guns fired 12 salvos in celebration of the capture of Orel and Byelgorod. Exactly a week after the recapture of Kharkov 12 salvos from 124 guns marked the occupation of Taganrog on August 30. **See also p. 245.**

Photo, Pictorial Press

I Fly With a Middle East Bomber Squadron

"Sometimes we see our eggs hatch down there in the darkness," says Flying-Officer P. Flyte, writing specially for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED of desert warfare and all that accompanies it. The day's work is hot and hard, the night's exploits filled with peril. Yet the life fascinates him.

The heavy bomber squadron with which I fly has been in the Middle East a very long time, hauling "eggs" to drop on the Italian and German armies. In those dark moments of the early days when the enemy was almost at the gates of Alexandria the hauls were long ones, across the Western Desert to Tobruk, Benghazi and beyond, and because of their regularity we used to call them the "mail-runs." Things changed when the Eighth Army began to roll the Germans back and we moved farther and farther into the desert close on the heels of the Army.

All ranks of the Desert Air Force did heroic work then keeping up the battering from bases which in many cases were taken over and used within a few hours of the enemy having "vacated the premises." All the airfields had been mined and left with wrecked equipment, poisoned water supplies, and so on, so that we had to work hard to make them serviceable and keep our bombers in the air. Often it was only a matter of minutes after landing at a new base before we were bombed-up and out for yet another "party."

Often we would be at a drome only a few days before being moved up another hundred miles or so. We would take-off from the old airfield loaded up with all kinds of gear, and in a few hours would be joined at the new base by the rest of the squadron personnel and equipment travelling by truck. Several hundred men and their kit, tents, oil, water, fuel, food, bombs, spares, trucks and planes moved in an hour or two across hundreds of miles of desert—not once but many times! The air offensive went ahead in ever-greater strength until the enemy was out of Africa for good.

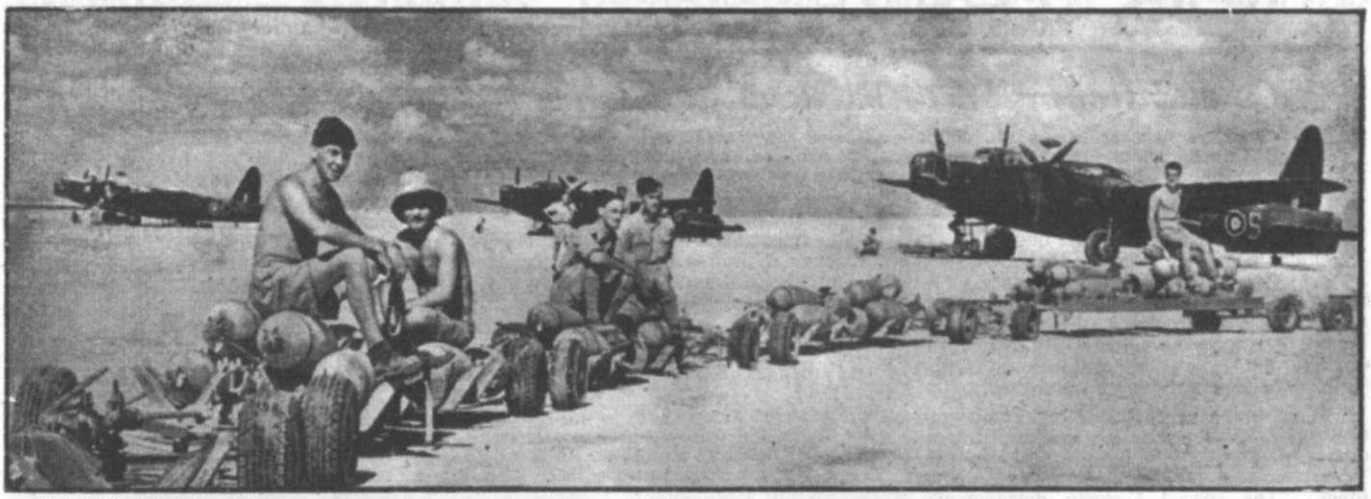
Now the Desert Air Forces—British, American, and all the others who fly with us—are operating from a hundred bases along the African coast, hitting hard at German and Italian industrial targets, ships, ports and railways from Sardinia to Salonika.

FLYING-OFFICER P. R. FLYTE, who gives a first-hand account of desert warfare from the airman's viewpoint in this page. Note the petrol drum serving as a table, and the empty bottle used as a lamp-glass in his tent.

Outside of operational duties men of the Desert squadrons live a somewhat simple and unexciting existence. My squadron, for example, is just a cluster of tents grouped alongside a hard-packed stretch of sand which is glorified by the term "airfield," and all around is a flat brown waste which stretches until it dips over the hazy horizon. I live, sleep, eat and work in tents, and find I miss the flapping of those canvas walls when I enter a place built of bricks and mortar. And, of course, we have to make our own amusements.

The day's work usually starts early, so that as much as possible can be done before the searing heat of the sun makes us lie on our camp-beds and gasp for air. By midday the metal of the aircraft is hot enough to blister unprotected hands, and any movement in the open is an effort. I find the great open spaces of the desert foster man-size appetites, and even the heat doesn't keep us away from the mess at mealtimes. Cooks do wonders with the rations and open-air field kitchens. Eggs are usually plentiful as we keep a few chickens scratching about the place, and wandering Arabs are always ready to barter eggs for cigarettes.

Most squadrons are within a half-hour's run of the Mediterranean, and mine is no exception. We organize swimming parties and go bumping off over the desert in an open truck, leaving behind us a wake of swirling sand. We waste no time in diving into those warm, tideless waters once we arrive. The sea is unbelievably clear, with fantastic rock shapes showing at the bottom. Once someone yelled that an octopus was swimming around with us, and I don't think I have ever



R.A.F. ARMOURERS are kept busy bombing-up the air-fleets that now operate a deadly shuttle service from Middle East bases: here Wellingtons are being loaded. See story in this and preceding page. *Photo, British Official*

swum faster than I did on that occasion. Sure enough it was an octopus, but only about two feet across, and the local Arabs collected it. They threw a sort of hand-grenade into the sea close to the visitor and the resulting explosion stunned or killed it. The Arabs then waded in and hauled out the body, departing with it in high glee to I know not what messy end.

One of our greatest needs is reading matter, and Cairo newspapers are a boon, even though they are often a week old when we get them. Many men are keeping up with their peacetime careers as well as they can, by taking correspondence courses run by English technical schools with overseas branches and by the Royal Air Force educational organization. We are fortunate in having several ex-schoolmasters among our air-crew personnel and they hold classes in languages, mathematics, and other subjects. I have just completed studying for a certain examination in engineering, and in a few weeks, when my examination papers arrive from England, I shall "sit" in the Desert with my commanding officer to vouch that I abide by the rules!

I LIKE the life, the friendship, the ruggedness, the sense of teamwork in all that goes on about the squadron; above everything I like the quiet of the desert night in those rare moments when we are not flying. A deep silence settles over the desert then—a silence you can almost feel. But that does not happen very often, for on most nights there is work to do. Early in the day I am busy with maps and charts for the long trip ahead. The afternoon slowly passes, and as we struggle into flying gear we hear the great bombers coughing into life down there on that sun-baked strip of sand. The ground crews are giving the "kites" a last-minute check. Perspiring in our thick gear, we bump out to "Miss Blandish"—our particular machine—and tumble out under the shadow of her wing. By tomorrow she will have another orchid painted on her side—we hope.

We file aboard, and then far off down the runway winks the take-off signal. Bill the pilot opens up our engines, and in a moment we are bumping down the flare-path leaving behind us a streaming wake of wind-lashed sand. Soon we fly into the darkness and head out to sea on yet another "party." We climb as we rumble on, and soon the falling temperature makes us glad of our heavy flying kit. The hours tick away and at last we arrive. Like a giant bat we swoop down the skies, and in the under-belly of the machine the long, black bomb-doors are gaping wide. Flak is streaking up now, but the target is in sight and we weave our way in.

Back over the inter-com comes the drone of the bomb-aimer as he squints through his bomb-sight: "Left, left, steady, left, left, steady, steady now . . ." We all tense as we level out on that last run, and then—"Bombs gone!" yells the bomb-aimer, and Bill pulls up and away out of the flak belt. Sometimes we see our eggs "hatch" down there in the darkness. Sometimes we are too busy twisting and turning to observe results, but we feel we "made it" O.K. and turn for home. As the grey of dawn brings a lighter streak to the East we circle over the airfield and get the welcome green signal from control. Bump, bump, and we are down again with the usual blinding swirl of sand as we touch.

We climb out and plod over to the Ops. tent for the usual reports, and then off to the mess for eggs and ham. I drain a third mug of tea and say one word to Bill across the plain wood table. "Bed!" Usually there is a brief dispute between several spiders and myself as to who shall use the camp-bed; it ends in our bedding-down together. And I dream of Cairo, and a bath.

I Saw Victory on the Land Army Battle Front

Touring the harvest fields, Patricia Ward of The Evening Standard (from which this story is reprinted) wrote in late August how farmers are rejoicing at the rich yield of Mother Earth: reward for our land-workers' toil, and aid to Britain's ultimate victory. See also pp. 218-219.

THROUGHOUT East Anglia three weeks ago the corn was standing high; today, all but a few of the fields are stubble and innumerable stacks bear testimony to a record harvest completed in record time. There is rejoicing among the farmers. Not only because the cereal crop was a "bumper" one and is threshing out even better than it looked. But as one of them put it to me: "An early harvest means a good start to the year; now we can get ahead with the ploughing and early sowing."

Already many of the fields have lost the last trace of gold, for the stubble has either been treated with cultivator or given a shallow ploughing to clear it of weeds. One of the reasons, the farmers reckon, that they are so well in advance of the year is that Norfolk is so highly mechanized. Much of the cutting has been done by combine-machines.

I watched one at work on one of the still uncut areas. It was a self-propelled machine, one of the latest types to arrive in the country. The farm worker who drove it said: "Wonderful job, isn't it? And it saves a

COMBINE HARVESTER which has its knives adjusted so that only the ears of the corn are reaped. The straw will be ploughed in for manure—an example of how our farmers strive to get the utmost from the land, typical of the thorough husbandry which has made this year's harvest so richly abundant. *Photo, Picture Post*

lot of time and labour. Of course, when anything goes wrong, it's a job to get it fixed." Through the chute and into the row of sacks slung behind the driver's seat barley poured forth in a golden stream.

The man who was handling the sacks picked up a handful to show me. "I've farmed in Norfolk for a lifetime," he said, "and I've never seen better-looking grain." The extra labour which has enabled the farmers to gather this "extra" harvest has been, I learned, almost entirely unskilled, provided by holiday camps and part-time volunteers from town and village.

"Farming is in the blood of every man and woman and child in the county," explained one white-haired farmer. I asked him what, apart from the question of labour, the main farming difficulties had been throughout the season. "Transport," he said, "though the Services have helped us a lot over that. Shortage of spare parts for machinery. And rats—but the War Agricultural Committee are doing a good job there. This year 500,000 acres have been cleared of them."

From Factory Manager to Guerilla Fighter

A wounded Ukrainian partisan, who had fought the Germans before, in 1918, tells Stanislav Radzinsky (in Soviet War News, from which this story is taken) how, wanting to crack enemy skulls again, he left a comfortable job and became commander of a detachment in the German rear.

You ask why I joined the partisans? There are thousands like myself. Can you understand our psychology—the psychology of elderly people who certainly could make themselves useful in the rear, but who feel bound to share actively in the struggle?

I am 55. I have worked in factories for twenty years. My last job was manager of a factory. You will be even more surprised if I tell you that ours was a munition factory, and that I am a graduate of the Academy of Industry—in short, I worked in one of our most essential industries.

I did not live in a place that has since been occupied by the Germans. I lived in Moscow. I had a good flat. I am married to a woman I dearly love, and am the father of two children—a daughter who is working in a munition factory, and a younger child. I was well provided for and had everything a man could want. I am an old soldier. I fought the Germans in the last war. I fought them again in the Ukraine in 1918, in the first partisan detachments. In those days we made our own weapons.

When, soon after the declaration of war, our communiqués informed the country of our armies' retreat, of the brutality of the Germans and of the devastation of our towns, I asked to be allowed to join the regular army. I was refused. Then came news of the development of the partisan movement in the Ukraine. After that I couldn't bear to remain in Moscow any longer.

SOVIET GUERILLAS, typical of thousands of soldiers without uniform who harry the retreating Germans and destroy enemy communications. *Photo, British Official*

I AM an old partisan and a Ukrainian. I know the country and the people. Twice already I had punched the savage visages of the Germans, and I felt I would not find rest until I had cracked their skulls for the third time and for all. My chief opposed my idea. At first he wouldn't hear of my leaving the factory. But I am a man of determination Then my friends attempted to dissuade me.

"I realize everything," I told them. "I know I can't sit happily in my comfortable office any more, or read my favourite books of an evening, or play with my children. I know that the partisan movement has just begun to develop, that at first we shall feel like hunted beasts, that I shall live in the cold forest, in open fields or in bears' haunts, and that a German bullet will dog my every step, and, even worse, that a traitor may deliver me into the hands of the enemy. I know I may be tortured to death. I have weighed everything in my mind, and have come to the conclusion that I shall be more useful as the organizer of a partisan detachment than as manager of a factory."

That was how I came to be in the German rear and began organizing a partisan group. Later on this group grew into a detachment, and I was chosen as its commander.

The British Prime Minister was right when he said that the Hun either clutches you by the throat or rolls at your feet. At the beginning of the war they clutched us by the throats, but you should see how they roll at your feet, begging for mercy, when they are taken prisoner!

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

AUGUST 18, Wednesday *1,446th day*

Mediterranean.—Toe of Italy bombed continuously by Allied air forces; Gioia, Tauro and Palmi shelled from sea.

Russian Front.—In Kharkov area, Russians captured Zmiev; Berezovka and Mylinka fell in Bryansk drive.

Australasia.—Wewak (New Guinea) raided; 64 enemy aircraft destroyed on the ground and 28 in the air.

General.—Mr. Eden and Mr. Brendan Bracken (Min. of Information) arrived in Quebec.

AUGUST 19, Thursday *1,447th day*

Sicily.—Stated that Italian Sixth Army (300,000 men) lost (dead, wounded, captured), during Sicilian fighting.

Mediterranean.—Day and night raids on Foggia and Salerno; Gioia and Tauro (Italy) again shelled.

Air.—French and Dutch airfields attacked by escorted Fortresses and other bombers; 41 enemy fighters destroyed. Mosquitoes bombed Berlin at night.

AUGUST 20, Friday *1,448th day*

Mediterranean.—Announced that on August 17 Lipari and Stromboli Islands surrendered to American warships.

Russian Front.—In Kharkov area, Russians captured Lebedin.

AUGUST 21, Saturday *1,449th day*

Mediterranean.—Villa Literno, Battipaglia, Cancello and Aversa bombed; Cotrone marshalling yards raided.

China.—Americans bombed Hankow.

U.S.A.—Japanese abandonment of Kiska (Aleutians) announced.

AUGUST 22, Sunday *1,450th day*

Mediterranean.—Rail communications at Salerno (nr. Naples) attacked.

Australasia.—Allied forces occupied Komiatum, Orodubi, Mt. Tambu and Goodview Junction in New Guinea.

Air.—Leverkusen, N. of Cologne, and other Rhineland objectives attacked at night.

AUGUST 23, Monday *1,451st day*

Mediterranean.—Italian railway yards at Bagnoli and Battipaglia bombed, airfield at Bari attacked. Wellingtons bombed Lindos, in Is. of Rhodes.

Russian Front.—Kharkov retaken by Russians. New Soviet offensive S.W. of Voroshilovgrad.

China.—First Japanese raid on Chungking for two years.

Air.—Heaviest raid to date on Berlin; 1,700 tons of bombs dropped in 50 minutes; 58 bombers lost.

General.—U.S. and Canadian troops landed on Segula Island (Aleutians).

AUGUST 24, Tuesday *1,452nd day*

Mediterranean.—Torre Annunziata (nr. Naples) railway yards bombed by Wellingtons; Locri in toe of Italy bombarded by British naval force.

Australasia.—Wewak (New Guinea) heavily attacked by Liberators.

Burma.—Banguna, S. of Buthidaung, attacked by Vengeance dive-bombers.

Air.—Fortresses attacked Bordeaux. Berlin raided by Mosquitoes.

General.—Quebec Conference ended; joint statement issued by President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill indicated that Japan was main subject of discussions. Himmler appointed Minister of the Interior in Germany.

AUGUST 25, Wednesday *1,453rd day*

Mediterranean.—Foggia airfields (Italy) heavily bombed.

Russian Front.—Zenkov, N.W. of Kharkov, captured by Russians.

Australasia.—Hansa Bay shipping base (New Guinea) attacked by nearly 100 Allied aircraft.

Air.—French airfields of Tricqueville, Beaumont-le-Roger and Bernay St. Martin attacked by Allied aircraft. Mosquitoes raided Berlin at night.

General.—Formation of S.E. Asia Command for operations against Japan, based on India and Ceylon, announced; Lord Louis Mountbatten, Combined Operations Chief, to be Supreme Allied Commander.

AUGUST 26, Thursday *1,454th day*

Mediterranean.—Taranto attacked by Wellingtons. Capizzi and Grazzanise (Italy) bombed by Fortresses.

General.—French Committee of National Liberation recognized by Britain, Canada and America.

AUGUST 27, Friday *1,455th day*

Mediterranean.—Sulmona, Benevento and Caserta railway yards in Rome-Naples area heavily bombed; Cotrone attacked.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops captured Sevsk, S. of Bryansk.

Australasia.—Arundel Is. (one mile from Kolombangara) occupied by U.S. forces.

Air.—Targets in France attacked by U.S. Fortresses. Nuremberg pounded at night for 45 mins. with 1,500 tons of bombs.

General.—Soviet Govt. recognized French Committee of National Liberation.

AUGUST 28, Saturday *1,456th day*

Sicily.—Announced that British naval losses during the campaign were 2 submarines, 3 M.T.B.s and one motor-gunboat.

Mediterranean.—Canello, Aversa, Terni and Taranto railway yards heavily raided.

Australasia.—Announced that all organized resistance at an end in New Georgia, and Bairoka occupied. Kahili airfield in Buin bombed.

General.—King Boris of Bulgaria died.

AUGUST 29, Sunday *1,457th day*

Mediterranean.—Orte, Lamezia, Cosenza and Torre Annunziata marshalling yards bombed.

Russian Front.—Lyubotin, in Kharkov area, occupied by Red Army.

General.—Fighting broke out in Denmark; Germans declared martial law; Danish warships escaped to Sweden, others scuttled. King Christian interned.

AUGUST 30, Monday *1,458th day*

Mediterranean.—Viterbo airfield, Aversa and Civitavecchia rly. yards (Italy) heavily bombed.

Russian Front.—Germans evacuated Taganrog, on Sea of Azov. Elnya fortress in Smolensk area seized by Russians in renewed offensive; penetrations made into N. Ukraine on 60m. front; Rylsk and Glukov taken.

General.—Germans in complete control in Denmark.

AUGUST 31, Tuesday *1,459th day*

Mediterranean.—Pisa and Pescara bombed. H.M.S. Rodney and Nelson shelled enemy coast defences N. of Reggio and S. of Cape Pellaro. Announced Italian liner Conti di Savoia sunk.

Air.—Berlin attacked by night with great weight of bombs for 45 minutes.

★ *Flash-backs* ★

1940

August 18. *152 German aircraft brought down over Britain.*

1941

August 18. *Russians announced evacuation of Nikolaiev. Mr. Churchill arrived in England after a meeting with the U.S. President at sea.*

August 21. *Russians evacuated Gomel.*

August 27. *Attempt made to assassinate Laval, the Quisling of France, leading collaborator with the Germans. "Cease fire" ordered in Iran.*

August 28. *Russians announced evacuation of Dnepropetrovsk.*

August 31. *Flying Fortresses bombed Bremen.*

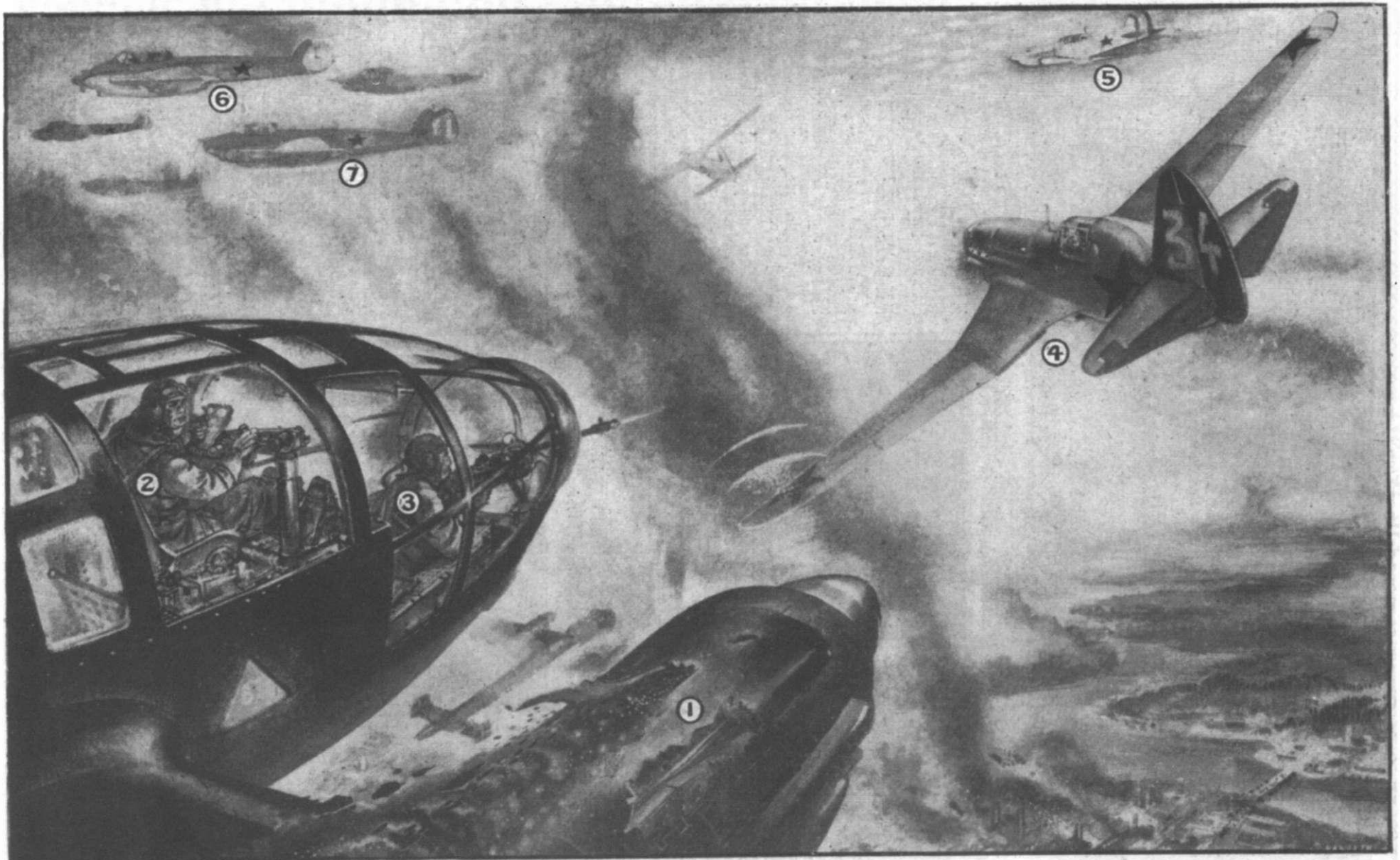
1942

August 19. *Combined Operations raid, lasting 9 hours, on Dieppe. Krasnodar (Kuban) evacuated by Russians.*

August 22. *Brazil declared war on Germany and Italy.*

August 26. *Japanese landed at Milne Bay, New Guinea.*

August 31. *Germans opened offensive at El Hemeimat (Egypt).*



THE LUFTWAFFE IN RUSSIA is now said to be so deficient in fighter planes that bomber formations operate with little fighter escort; our Ally claims to have destroyed 100 Nazi machines a day since June 5, 1943.

Above, a Nazi bomber unit is attempting to cover a river-crossing for the retreating German forces, whilst the Russian bombers, operating in support of the Red Army, have attacked dumps and concentrations on the German-held river bank; meanwhile, the Soviet fighters break up the enemy attack.

A German Heinkel 111 (1), almost obsolescent but still much used on the Russian front, has had its starboard engine cowling torn open by cannon fire and the power unit is beginning to flame. The pilot (2) and the gunner-bomb-aimer (3) are seen through the plexiglas panels, the latter training his 7·9-mm. gun on the Soviet MIG-3 fighter (4) as it flashes past. These gull-wing planes have a 1,200 h.p. liquid-cooled engine and a speed of over 350 m.p.h.; armament is one heavy machine-gun or cannon and two other machine-guns. Close by is a later Soviet fighter type, the Lagg-3 (5), now in production and of all-wood construction. Later models are said to fly in excess of 350 m.p.h. with a 1,600 h.p. engine and 20-mm. cannon, plus machine-guns. They are reputed to be a match for the Focke-Wulf 190.

Seen through the smoke, upper left, are two types of Russian light-reconnaissance bomber, the AK 4 (6) and the PE 2 (7). Both these types fly at 300 m.p.h., with two 1,100 h.p. engines. The former has a crew of two; the PE 2 carries a 1,700-lb. bomb load and a crew of three.

Specially drawn for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED *by Haworth*

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

THE constrictor-like grip of the United Nations' air forces continues to tighten round the Axis in both hemispheres. By combined operations, wherein the air arm has played a redoubtable part, the Japanese forces have been driven out of New Georgia in the Solomon Islands. Kolombangara and Vella Lavella islands are the next stepping-stones to the islands of Choiseul and Bougainville, themselves stepping-stones to the still more important islands of New Ireland and New Britain, in the second of which lies the strategically important harbour of Rabaul.

Rabaul, used by the Japanese as their principal base for operations in that part of the South Seas, has been the target for numerous United Nations air raids, and the waters around about Rabaul have become the graveyards of many Japanese ships sunk by air attack.

THE capture of Rabaul would turn the Japanese flank in New Guinea, mark the beginning of the end of Japanese occupation of any part of Melanesia, and remove entirely all threat from Japan against the Queensland territory of Australia, curtailed although that threat already is by the United Nations' recapture of Papua and the peninsular area of North-East New Guinea.

Rabaul—although a strategic objective on the immediate horizon—is itself 40 degrees south and about 12 degrees east of Tokyo, so that even when Rabaul is captured there will still lie about 2,800 English statute miles between the Melanesian base and the heart of Japan. And that means that the capital of Nippon will be too far-distant to fall within bombing range of Rabaul.

Thus we must regard the action of General MacArthur's forces in the Solomon Islands and New Guinea as the preliminary moves necessary to secure suitable bases—principally for seaborne lines of communication—from which to launch further campaigns against the Netherlands East Indies and the Philippine Islands. The selection of General MacArthur for this long-term operation is sound, for he had unrivalled experience during the Philippine defence action against Japan; he is thus fighting towards a known terrain, always an advantage.

NEVERTHELESS, capture of Rabaul would open up another aspect of combined operations, for it would place in the hands of the United Nations a suitable base from which to employ aircraft carriers against the numerous islands under Japanese mandate and occupation between Melanesia and Japan—the Marshalls, Carolines, Palau, Marianas, and the archipelago running north to Nippon.

It would mark the beginning of the closing of the Pacific ring around our Far Eastern foe, from Kiska and Attu in the north-east, Midway in the east, and Rabaul in the south. And the process that was applied to Germany in relation to expansion *westward* towards the Americas would then be equally applied to Japan in relation to expansion *eastward* towards the Americas.

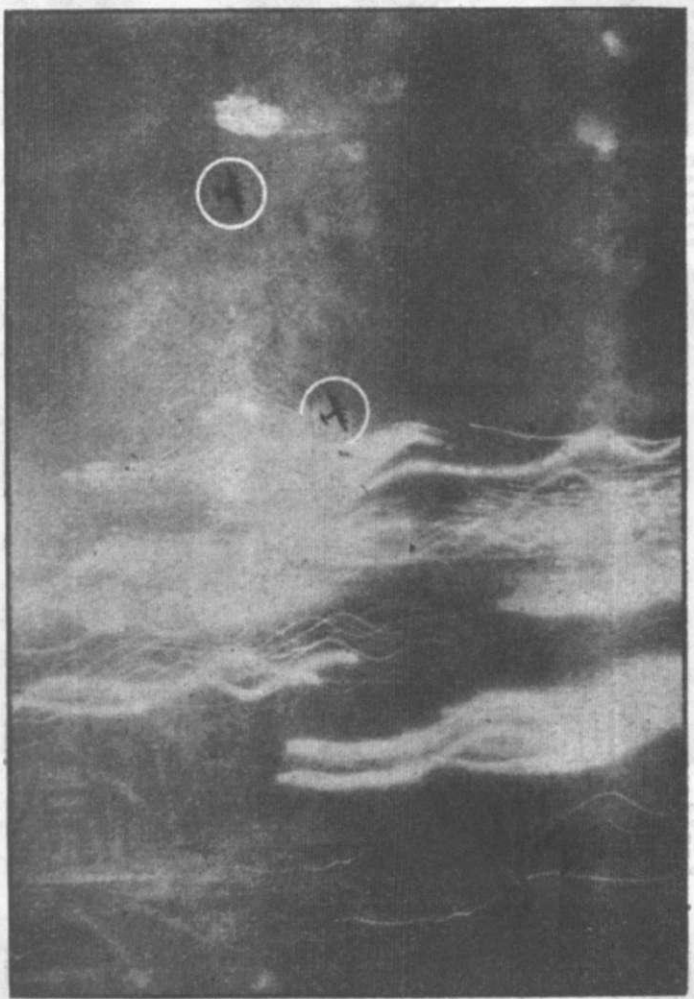
Thus the fundamental necessity of world strategy would be secured to the United Nations, namely, the absolute security of the base represented by the land mass of the Western Hemisphere. Then, with the ring tightening ever more effectively around our enemies, the outcome of the war would be assured, because, whatever else might happen, one nation could certainly not be defeated and victory must go to the Allies of that nation—which is America. That is the geographical interpretation of the war today.

Thus, with America as the main world base; Britain as the main advanced base against Europe (with Africa as a subsidiary base); Australia as the main base against Japanese occupation in the South-West Pacific; and India as the main base against Japanese occupation of the Asiatic mainland (with China as the advanced base): we can observe the general strategic lay-out of the war, and the vital part that aircraft must play therein, on all fronts.

In view of the great distances that lie between Japanese industry and Allied bomber bases, it is important to observe the indication that President Roosevelt at the time of the Ottawa Conference gave of the intention to utilize air transport as a line of communication to keep a forward bomber force operating in China against Japan proper.

China and aircraft carriers are the only bases from which bombs can fall upon Japan at present. The difficulty with the carrier method is the small load of bombs which carrier-borne aircraft can carry on a longish flight because of the restrictions imposed upon the aircraft by the relatively small flying-off deck, even when the carrier is under way and making its own half-gale breeze to aid the aircraft to take off.

So we must presume that the staff have figured things out and have come to the conclusion that with a force of bomber boys pushed well forward in Chinese-held China (where they can get within about 1,200 miles of Tokyo even now) and air transports to feed them with bombs, fuel, food, oil and all the requirements of a modern air force unit on active service, a greater load of bombs can be brought to bear upon Japan than can be achieved by carrier methods. Even then, the use of both methods would keep the Japanese guessing, and would make it far more difficult for them to provide adequate defence against attacks which would come from both east and west of Japan.



PEENEMUNDE BY NIGHT—the night of August 17, 1943, when Bomber Command visited this Baltic coast town for the first time. Bright moonlight favoured the raiders, two of whom are silhouetted against the glare of fires as they run over the target—the largest and most important aircraft research and radiolocation station in Germany.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

IN Europe the Axis forces are steadily being hemmed in and pinned down. With the Russians driving slowly but steadily westward from the steppes into the Ukraine, and destroying German military equipment, including aircraft, on a great scale, the demands upon German factories must be redoubled to drive the output up to meet the incessant requisitions of the German general staff.

As a counter to the power of German industry to deliver the goods which the German army must have if it is to maintain even defensive fighting effectively, fall the blows of Bomber Command, descending upon German industry and communications with ever-rising force. The 1,500-ton raid is now a standard-scale stroke. Raids of this size have recently fallen all over the Ruhr, on Peenemünde radiolocation and experimental plant, Hamburg, Berlin, Nuremberg, and in Italy upon Milan and Turin. Some of the loads dropped in these raids were in excess of 1,500 tons, the greatest being about 2,300 tons.

The air defences of the Luftwaffe have been unable to inflict losses upon the British bombers which would be sufficient to deter them. On the contrary, the flood grows. Night fighters rise against the bombers in increasing numbers. But still the rate of loss seldom reaches five per cent, rarely exceeds it, and is mostly only a fraction of that loss rate.

Added to these devastating night raids are the American day raids against appropriate targets, such as the Messerschmitt factories at Wiener-Neustadt and Regensburg. Bomber Command and the American Army Eighth Air Force are beating down the power of Germany to defend herself against the air blows. The crest of the wave of German air defence may have been already reached. If so, Germany is sinking into the trough. The real bombing war is only now beginning.

Superb Courage Earns Merchant Navy Honours

CAPT. R. E. HOPKINS, O.B.E.
Master of a merchantman torpedoed and shelled by a U-boat, he returned the enemy's fire, brought his ship to harbour, then went again through submarine-infested waters for essential repairs.

CAPT. JAMES KENNEDY, O.B.E.
Skipper of a merchantman torpedoed 300 miles from land, he and his crew exhibited "outstanding courage and endurance." Some were washed ashore on an uninhabited island, others reached safety on rafts.

CAPT. W. H. GRINSHAW, O.B.E.
He brought his ship into port after three days of almost continuous attacks by aircraft and submarines, repairing the damage and improvising so promptly and rapidly that the ship never lost speed.

APPRENTICE D. O. CLARKE, G.C.
For two hours he rowed a boatload of survivors from the blazing hulk of his torpedoed ship, with his hands burned to the bone. He died singing to cheer the hearts of the shipmates he helped to save.

CHIEF OFFICER R. V. BURNS, G.M.
With complete unconcern for his own safety he led a volunteer party to tackle an unexploded heavy bomb which had hit his ship during an air attack. They carried out the difficult and dangerous job with success.

APPRENTICE COLIN FOOKES, G.M.
When the magazine of his oil tanker was set ablaze by a bomb he grabbed smouldering boxes of cordite and unexploded shells and threw them overboard, regardless of burns and the very great danger.

CHIEF STEWARD G. H. ANSON, B.E.M.
In harbour in the Mediterranean his ship was subjected to heavy aerial attack. Together with the Chief Officer and the cook he plugged holes below the water-line, enabling the ship to carry on an hour later.

CHIEF STEWARD R. THOMPSON, B.E.M.
When a member of the crew suffered a torn knee-cap, "something had to be done." The necessary operation was carried out by this amateur surgeon while the ship was rocked by enemy bombs.

APPRENTICE A. V. WATT, B.E.M.
This nineteen-year-old seaman helped to save 32 shipmates who had been adrift for seven days in an open boat in the Arctic after the convoy had been attacked and his ship had been torpedoed.

Photos, L.N.A., Daily Mirror, Planet News, Northern Press Agency

Editor's Postscript

"MAN, am I no a bonny fighter?" asked Alan Breck in Stevenson's great story, as he wiped his sword after a combat. The Russians can without any boastfulness lay that same flattering unction to their souls. How enormously they have improved since those summer and autumn battles of 1941, in which they were rolled back and back until the enemy was very near Moscow and Leningrad! How few were those who believed they would be able to hold out much longer! Our good friend Maisky told me once that distrust of the Red Army in the highest circles here was the "most unkindest cut" he had to bear during his long ambassadorship in London. He never doubted its recovery. He knew the men who would reorganize the defeated armies and at the right moment throw them into battle again. He kept up a continual storming of the Foreign Office and the American Embassy in order to hasten and increase the supply of tanks and planes to the Russian troops. He echoed Mr. Churchill's "Give us the tools and we will finish the job." They have not done it yet, but it is quite on the cards that they may do it. If they can beat the Nazis in summer, they should be able to rout them utterly in winter. The war might well be ended by the Cossacks sweeping into Berlin; the fear of that has haunted the Germans since 1914.

ANY fighting that might take place in Calabria would tax the energies and temper of the troops taking part in it more than either the Desert or Sicily has done. Few people know this almost uninhabited part of the Italian kingdom. I say "almost uninhabited" because one so seldom sees anybody. The villages are many of them approachable only by paths. Roads are not numerous, railway facilities less so; there is little water, the soil is arid, the summer fiercely hot, the winter cold. Snow stays on the mountains six months in the year. The population are mostly a poor-looking lot. Malaria is endemic on the coast strip. Cultivation is unenterprising, if not primitive. The million and a half Calabrians grow grapes for wine, olives for oil, rice, tobacco of a low grade, oranges, lemons, figs. If you like sucking liquorice jujubes, they probably came from there. I never was in a part of the world that seemed less attractive. The most interesting discovery I made was that Albanians have lived in certain little Calabrian townships of their own for five centuries, and still remain Albanian, speaking that language and wearing their national dress. They are a finer race than the Italians of this area, who mostly seemed to me degenerates of a low type.

AN attempt is to be made to get a legal decision as to what exactly Home Guards are. They have reckoned themselves part of the armed forces ever since they were given uniforms in 1940. Now they are under military discipline this view is taken more strongly. Yet it appears the authorities do not share it. Recently there have been one or more cases of Home Guards being killed in discharging their functions and their estates not being relieved of Death Duties, as are, I understand, the estates of men killed on active service. This seems a most unsatisfactory position. It ought to be cleared up. If a volunteer who is under no compulsion to risk his life does so of his own free will and loses it, the community may treat him as it does other civilians who die in their beds. But if the community conscripts us and treats us as soldiers, even if we only serve as such in our spare time, then it is bound, it seems to me, to put us on the same footing as other soldiers in every way. What a difference between the Local Defence Volunteers of the summer three years ago and the compact, well-trained, military Home Guards of today! As the song of South African War days said of Tommy Atkins, they're "a credit to their country and *to* their native land."

THAT pensions for total disablement have been increased from 37s. 6d. to 40s. a week is all to the good, but how meagre that extra half-crown seems when you consider how little it will buy nowadays! Also when you compare it with the money spent by some people on meals. Five shillings is the limit for the price of a meal, but it is possible to expand this to a couple of pounds when you add oysters and unrationed food and wine. Lots do pay as much as that. More attention is being paid to the inequality of incomes than this matter ever attracted before. But there is no way to check it that I can see. The Russians tried, and had no success. A few years ago (it may be so still) the man with the largest income in the U.S.S.R. was a dance-band leader. If that is Socialism, it is absurd. Yet on the principle that those whose services are most in request by the public should get the highest pay it is, on paper, equitable. But how could anybody justify remunerating a man who provides jiggerty music for dancers more highly than statesmen, historians, doctors and surgeons of distinction, men and women engaged on important research work? Logically all who contribute their best efforts to the national service should be paid alike. Will they ever be? I doubt it.

SQUADRON-LEADER W. H. BOWEN, Officer Commanding R.A.F. High Speed Launch Base, Dover. His men's job is to rescue airmen shot down in the Channel. They operate in fair weather and foul, constantly endangered by German gunfire from the French coast, mines, E-boats and enemy armed trawlers.
Photo, News Chronicle

THE world, it has been said, does not know its greatest men until they are dead. I should alter that to "most useful men." The "great" are seldom useful. Frederick was not, Napoleon was not (except for his codification of French law and construction of French ports); Alexander and Alfred have better reputations, but the former gave himself away by his silly grievance of having no more worlds to conquer and the other couldn't even keep the cakes from burning. But here and there are scattered about sparsely men who are of signal use to humanity and yet never come into the public eye. One of these was Sir Frederick Phillips of the Treasury, who has had such enthusiastic tributes from many quarters since he died a week or two ago. I doubt whether more than one person in a hundred thousand of us had ever heard his name. He had much to do with making and operating the Lease-Lend arrangements between this country and the United States, and was so much respected and liked in Washington that it is hard to find anyone to take his place. To the credit of the British Civil Service, when it finds such men, it employs them usually to the best advantage.

I RECOLLECT seeing, when I was a small boy at an exhibition in Edinburgh, what was then a novelty—paper made from wood. It was considered almost a miraculous novelty. To me it all seemed wrong. I remembered a sentence read out for translation by the old Polish teacher from whom I learnt French. "Books are preented on paaper, ant paaper ees made of rags." That was true, but the amount of paper required so vastly increased (and is still increasing) that it was essential to find some other substance from which to make it. Unfortunately, we have scarcely any trees in this country that can be turned into wood pulp. The United States are luckier. I have had sent to me copies of publications issued by the American Ordnance Department. "Prodigious!" is the word for them. Thick and beautifully shiny pages, lots of them. No crowding of type or use of small print. "Battlenecks" is just the thing to catch the conscience of the war factory worker. Another is "Tremendous Trifles" with its pages laid out so as to impress their lessons on the most infantile minds. The producers understand that appeal to the eye is not less important than appeal to the intelligence.

IN the comments on the great victory won by Field-Marshal Smuts in the South African general election I have seen no suggestion that it is a result, long delayed, of Britain's wise generosity in handing the country back to the Boers as well as the British inhabitants and conferring full self-government upon them. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." Since we "cast our bread" in 1906 (when Campbell-Bannerman took the statesmanlike decision to wipe out war bitterness which led to the foundation of the Union of South Africa), there have been periods in which it seemed that the hostile critics of that act were right. At times the enmity between British and Afrikanders has been almost savage. But they came together when their country was in danger, and the German invasion of Holland swung the Dutch over to the side of the United Nations. South Africa has difficult problems which can be solved if the Dutch and British elements pull together, as they look like doing

Going Home Again in Liberated Sicily

BACK TO THEIR WAR-SHATTERED TOWN return refugees of Bronte, following its occupation by British troops on August 8, 1943. The priest is one who stayed behind and gave valuable help to Amgot officials (see p. 180). Nelson was created Duke of Bronte by the King of Naples in 1799 for services rendered, and a descendant, Lt.-Comdr. Viscount Bridport, is now holder of the title to this estate (see p. 171). *Photo, British Official*

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